

THE CHILDREN
OF EUROPE

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THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

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MARIE, TOO, WEARS SABOTS

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CHAPTER I

JEAN AND MARIE OF FRANCE

JEAN and Marie are neighbours of ours. It is true they live on the other side of the English Channel, but in these days it is easy for us to breakfast at home and have dinner with our little friends in France. If we go from London we are in Dover in about two hours, from Dover to Calais takes another hour, and two or three hours in the train brings us to the heart of "Beautiful France."

ACROSS THE PLAIN

On our way to Jean's village we pass through a sea of golden wheat which stretches on every side as far as we can see, or we are gliding across a great plain filled with green of many shades. The hedges which are so familiar at home are nowhere to be seen, and unless we keep our eyes open we cannot see where one man's field ends and another's begins. French farmers think hedges are wasteful—and so they are, for they cover ground which might be made to yield crops.

There are enormous quantities of huge beet

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grown here, and we can see their great roots sticking up out of the ground beneath their waving green tops. These are the beet used for making sugar, of which certain parts of France produce a great deal.

Those green plants that look something like overgrown dark green lettuces or cabbages are tobacco plants. Presently their choice leaves will be gathered, dried, and sorted, and cut in machines to make tobacco for cigarettes, or rolled up skilfully into cigars.

As we go farther south we notice great areas covered with plants that look at first sight like beans climbing on short poles. These are vines, and later the vineyards will be busy with men and women, boys and girls, plucking the grapes, and carrying them in tall baskets strapped on their backs to the winepress, to make the wine for which France is famous.

Here and there are broad stretches of meadowland dotted with cattle, or thick woods of fine trees, or fields of green fodder.

JEAN AND MARIE

This is Jean's village—a cluster of white walled houses with deeply sloping thatched roofs and green-shuttered windows. Around each house is a small vegetable garden and an orchard of plums or apples. Jean lives at the big farm just out of the village.

When we go into the big yard we find only Jean's grandfather at home. There he sits at the front door in his blue blouse and big wooden shoes, puffing away at his pipe. He tells us that everybody else

JEAN AND MARIE OF FRANCE

is busy in the fields, and that Jean is helping the men weed the beet-crop on the farther field. We are a little surprised perhaps, for we know that Jean's father is very far from poor. But on French farms everybody works—and works hard from dawn until sunset.

We enter the low kitchen. It is very clean and very simple. The floor is made of wide flat stones set closely together, there is no carpet. In the corner stands a big oak press with metal dishes and earthenware plates and pots upon it. We sit down in big wooden chairs and wait for Jean and Marie.

Here they come. Jean wears a loose blue blouse, a flat cap of dark blue cloth (something like a tam o'shanter without its tassel), loose blue trousers reaching just below the knee, *no stockings*, and big *sabots* or wooden shoes. Marie, too, wears *sabots*. She has a wide kirtle of blue stuff, a white apron, and a tight little bodice with flowers embroidered on it, and she wears a cap of stiff white linen with curious wide flaps to it. She has been visiting a neighbouring farm.

We are glad we speak French, for soon we are talking as hard as ever we can. We find, however, that the French of Jean and Marie is not altogether the French we learned at school!

BLESSING THE FIELDS

Jean and Marie tell us a great deal about their life on the farm, and when we show our admiration of the wonderful way in which French farmers make the most of their farms, Jean says, "Ah! it is not our work. It is the work of the good God,

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who makes our fields fruitful It is because the fields are blessed every spring "

When we wait for him to explain, he tells us how in spring the priests go forth to bless the fields so that they shall yield an abundant harvest Early some spring morning, when the birds begin to twitter beneath the eaves, and the blue-grey dawn appears in the east, a long procession leaves the village for the fields White-robed girls decked with flowers, choristers in scarlet and lace, and the good priests bearing sacred vessels, lead the way, followed by all the villagers in a long line As they go they chant solemn hymns, beseeching God to bless the earth, and all that it gives—wheat, wine, fruit, and flower, clear water, and green grass Now and then the priests sprinkle ground and tree, flowers and brooks, with holy water, and pronounce blessings upon all Afterwards the procession returns to the village, the villagers go to their homes, and the day's work begins

We are very interested when Jean and Marie take us out into the great square yard to see the big horses in their stables and the crowd of cackling fowls which rush up to Marie expecting another supper When at last we go to bed up the wooden stairs, we feel very tired We cannot make out what there is strange about the bed When we jump into it we are inclined to think that there is some mistake or that someone is playing a joke on us, for the mattress seems to be on top! But it is all right after all Instead of having many bedclothes to pull over us, we snuggle down under a big, wide, soft downy cushion

JEAN AND MARIE OF FRANCE

IN THE TOWN

Next morning we are up early and on the way to the railway station some miles away, for Jean and Marie are taking us to a large town near-by, where they often go to visit their cousin Pierre

We have never been in a large French town before, and find a great many things to interest us. Many of the long straight streets are lined with fine trees, and when we admire them Jean tells us that they are not half so fine as the boulevards of Paris. Here and there on the sidewalk are quaint little stalls (like round sentry boxes, we say to ourselves) in which newspapers are sold. Everybody seems to be abroad, and everybody seems to have plenty of leisure, for the cafes are full. We cannot help thinking how nice it would be if we had cafes in England, outside which people could sit as they do in France, sipping their coffee, drinking their wines or syrups, eating their meals, and chatting with their friends as they watch the people go by. Then we remember how fickle is British weather. Cafes are all very well in a bright, sunny land like France, but in England, where it may rain any day and every day, and where we rarely get much real summer, they would be impossible.

There go some boys to school. They are dressed in black blouses and short knickers, and although they are at least twelve or thirteen years old they wear socks! Each one carries strapped on his back a flat leather satchel, and all seem much more serious than English boys on the way to school. Perhaps it is only because a fierce looking gendarme,

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with cloak and sword, is standing at the street corner.

We find things a little awkward when we cross the road, for traffic keeps to the right instead of to the left, and used as we are to London streets where traffic keeps to the left, we look the wrong way first and nearly get run over!

We have our lunch at one of the cafés, and after a peep at the shops go back again to the village and dinner—the last meal in a French home. We get accustomed to French meals in time. But at first we do miss our porridge and egg or bacon for breakfast! All we get is a cup of coffee and some bread or roll and butter, with perhaps a little jam. And we *do* feel hungry by the time “second breakfast” comes at midday. But it is always a *good* second breakfast; much better sometimes than the midday dinner we have at home. There is no tea at five o’clock—we sadly miss that at first. We have to go on till six or seven o’clock when dinner comes—always a big meal.

We cannot help wondering how Jean and Marie will feel when they come back to England to stay with us. How will they get on with our beds and our meals?

CHAPTER II

JAN OF HOLLAND

ON the top of a high bank which faces the smooth green sea stands a sturdy boy with flaxen hair and bright blue eyes. That is Jan. He is watching the brown fishing boats, heavily loaded with anchovies, which have just come into the little harbour. Like all Dutch boys, he loves the sea, although he lives with his father and mother and sister, Kaatje, in a farm-house more than a mile away.

But what astonishes us about him is not his queer hat, nor his wide baggy trousers with a big blue patch over one knee, nor his clumsy wooden shoes. He is smoking a big cigar! And he cannot be more than twelve years old! If an English boy did this we should be very shocked. We should think him very foolish, and should expect him to feel very ill soon. But he is a Dutch boy, and most Dutch boys are smokers even when they are mere toddlers. So we need not be surprised at Jan's cigar.

Jan wears a hat with a high crown that tilts backward. His loose tunic comes close up to his chin, and is ornamented with enormous buttons. His loose baggy trousers are drawn in at his waist by a

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leather belt, which fastens with a big, bright silver buckle.

JAN'S COUNTRY

Jan lives in Holland. If we clamber up to the top of the high bank where he is standing, we can see a wide flat land stretching away to the distant sky-line in many shades of green, except in one or two spots where a blaze of red, purple, yellow, and pink tells us that the tulips and hyacinths are in bloom. Jan's people are famous bulb growers, and grow them in enormous quantities to send to England and other places abroad.

Striking across the low flat plain, we notice other high banks like the one we are on, but not so high and not so wide. These are the famous *dykes* which mean so much to Holland. The big ones near the sea are faced with stone or concrete. They keep back the sea, for much of Western Holland is below sea-level. If the sea-dyke bursts during a storm, the sea breaks in and floods the green country, drowning the cattle and sweeping away the villages. So sea-dykes must be strong. Inland are other dykes built to keep the water in the canals and rivers, most of which are higher than the land through which they run. The Dutch use the dykes as roads, for they are more than wide enough at the top; and along some of the big sea-dykes you will find not only roads, but railways as well! Often rows of tall poplars are planted along them, for their roots help to bind the soil together and prevent the dykes from being washed away by the rain.

A little farther up the coast, we should find that



HE IS SMOKING A BIG CIGAR!

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Dame Nature herself had been helping the Dutch to keep the sea out of their country. Here the wind has blown up great banks of sand, called *dunes*, all along the shore. But the worst of these dunes is that the sand is loose and blows about badly—even ruining the fields inland. So the Dutch plant broom in neat rows across and across the sandy slopes, or they plant rows of young trees and bushes—all of which have long roots that bind the loose sand down and prevent it spreading. Another thing we notice is the number of canals—great wide straight lanes of water—running into the far distance. These help to drain the land, but they are of very great use as “roads,” and on many of them we can see big bluffed-bowed barges, some drawn by horses, others by little snorting tugs, and others with big red-brown sails hoisted to the wind.

Jan likes the canals best in winter when they are frozen, for then he can skate with the boys and play *kolf*, or “touch,” or other games on the ice. Everybody skates then—even old ladies and gentlemen—for the ice-road is the easiest and the pleasantest. Jan's sister Kaatje likes it too, for Jan fetches out the family sledge, tucks her comfortably into its deep arm-chair seat, and pushes her along as he skates. Jan's father has a big horse-sleigh which he uses in winter on the ice, and Pieter, the dear old horse which pulls the light cart to market in the summer, has his shoes spiked so that he can get firm footing on the ice. Winters are merry in Holland, although they are much colder than ours. Skating matches, *kolf* matches, sledge and sleigh races, and fairs on the ice are all in the fun.

JAN OF HOLLAND

BY THE CANAL

Let us go home with Jan to meet sister Kaatje, and father and mother

As we walk along the dyle Jan's wooden shoes go clatter ! clatter ! and we can't help wondering how much noise a class of Dutch boys must make as they march into school No wonder Jan calls his shoes "Kloompers" But Dutch teachers are just as wise as other teachers are they make children leave the kloompers outside in a neat row !

There is one other thing we notice as we go along, and that is the number of windmills On every side we see them—there must be thirty or forty of them at least Jan tells us that nearly every farmer has one, and points proudly to his father's—a tall red windmill with sails seventy feet long and a wide balcony around it half way up In a flat country like Holland the wind sweeps fresh and strong over the land, and the wise Hollanders make it work for them The windmills pump water, grind corn, saw wood, beat hemp, drain the land, run machinery in little factories, and do a hundred-and-one other kinds of useful work

Soon we come to a pathway that leads by the side of a canal to the village Market boats loaded with vegetables are making their slow way along, and when boats are about to pass one another we hear the drivers of the horses that draw them blow funny little toots on the horns which they carry Many house boats painted in gay colours lie by the banks of the canal They have snowy curtains peeping from their little windows, and

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rows and rows of painted flower-pots, and a bird-cage or two

Now the neat little gardens of neat little houses come down to the smooth green water. Every plant seems prim and proper and exactly in its place, and hedges are cut and trimmed into all kinds of quaint patterns. Houses are scrupulously clean, and bright with brilliant reds and greens, or whitewashed to the low eaves of their red-tiled roofs. Dutch housewives seem to have a perpetual spring-cleaning, every day the house is washed and scrubbed inside and out, until one is afraid almost to go into it. In any case we should be expected to leave our dirty shoes outside on the mat, if we did!

See that big grey bird standing solemnly on one leg in the middle of a huge bundle of sticks and rubbish on the top of a chimney-pot! There is another on that house—and another! They are storks. Jan tells us that his people think a great deal of the storks, and would not dream of harming or even frightening one of them. For the storks eat frogs and other creatures that help to destroy the dykes, and so these birds do good and useful work in the service of the State. Of course it is a nuisance when the storks build their nest on one's chimney-pot. Jan says that his father has set up in his tulip fields stout poles with a wide cup-shaped wooden piece at the top, so that Mr and Mrs Stork can use them as their summer dwelling-place instead of the chimney. In winter all the storks fly away to the warm sunny south, but in spring they come back again to the old nesting place. I wonder how they find the way!

JAN OF HOLLAND

JAN'S HOME

Now we can see the farm-house. It has white walls and a high-pitched roof which slopes its eaves very low. The upper part of the roof is thatched, the lower part is made of fine red tiles. The windows are fitted with bright green shutters. Everything looks wonderfully clean and neat.

Here comes Kaatje. What wide skirts she has! And what a wonderful embroidered bodice! And such a pretty linen cap with wide flaps at its sides, all starched and stiffened to stick out well. She has two long plaits of yellow hair tied at the ends with neat bows, and her eyes are as blue and her cheeks as rosy as Jan's. Like Jan, she wears wooden shoes—but she is *not* smoking a cigar!

Kaatje's mother stands in the doorway. She is plump, rosy, and fair like Kaatje, and wears a snowy linen cap, a dark blue gown of woollen stuff below a wonderful spotted bodice, and wooden shoes. Her skirts stick out almost like the old-fashioned crinoline. It is the fashion in Holland for girls and ladies to wear a large number of petticoats—eight, ten, twelve! A girl who wears a large number thinks herself somebody, especially if they are of different colours.

She is very fond of Kaatje. When Kaatje was born, her mother hung outside the front door a tinsel ball covered with lovely lace, so that all might know that a baby girl had arrived. When Jan came, the ball was red instead of tinsel.

There is Jan's father—baggy trousers, big buttons, huge wooden shoes and rosy face—just like a

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great big Jan ! But instead of the cigar he smokes a long pipe with a beautifully coloured china bowl

Let us go inside the house We must slip off our shoes, as Jan and Kaatje do There are no carpets The floor is made of tiles, and is scattered with clean white sand A fire is always burning in the big shining stove with its brass knobs and copper pots The walls are covered with fine glazed tiles in blue and white, on which are scenes from well known stories Jan and Kaatje love these little pictures, and have spent many delightful hours in winter listening to mother's stories about them

The best room is rarely used, except for weddings or other important occasions We go all through the house, and do not see a single bed ! We wonder where the family sleeps, until little Kaatje draws aside some curtains in her room and shows us a dear little bed in a sort of cupboard in the wall, about a yard from the floor !

THE FARM

We have not time to look over the farm, which is kept neat and trim, as everything is in Holland But we can admire the herd of beautiful black and white cows just home from milking, the spotless dairy with its shining brass pans and milk cans, the neat little cart which the big farm dog draws along the streets to deliver the morning milk, the piles of yellow butter and the heap of big round cheeses

The cows, Jan tells us, are " the most important

JAN OF HOLLAND

people in the family." They are best cared for, they live in the same house as the rest of the family in their own big room downstairs, and if hard times should come, the farmer takes care that the cows are the last to suffer.

CHAPTER III

PIETER OF BELGIUM

A JOURNEY of only six hours takes us from London to the little village where Pieter lives. First comes the short train journey to Dover, where we get a steamer that takes us to Ostend in about three hours, then there is a short railway journey, and after that a ride in a long wagon to the village.

PIETER'S COUNTRY

If we were not told that this was Belgium, we might easily think we had found our way back again to Holland where our friend Jan lives. For here the land is very flat, and there are long straight canals, and long avenues of trees just like those we saw in Holland.

But after all, it is not so very strange, for Holland is only "next door," as it were, and Pieter often goes there in the wagon with his friends, many of whom can speak Dutch as well as they can their own language.

One queer thing about Pieter's country is that several languages are spoken there. In the south which is nearest France, French is the language most people speak, in the northern half they speak



PIETER BRINGS THE COW HOME

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Flemish, which is something like Dutch, and in the east, near the borders of Germany, numbers of people speak German. It is surprising, too, how many people understand English, especially along the coast and in the big towns, that is because Belgium has so many English visitors, who go there to spend their holidays.

Though the land is flat and very Dutch looking where Pieter lives, all Belgium is not like that. Pieter's cousin Suzanne, who lives far away in south east Belgium, has her home by a beautiful river which glides swiftly between great rocky walls and high forests. In this wonderful valley are some of the most beautiful spots in Europe.

PIETER AND SUZANNE

When we first see Pieter we find him by the roadside tending the family cow which is slowly sauntering along, cropping the rich grass by the wayside as it goes.

Pieter wears big sabots or wooden shoes, and a loose blue blouse, and rather baggy trousers that seem as if they must have been made for a much larger person. In his hand he carries a stick to keep the cow in order. Not that he ever really beats her—the cow is far too precious for that. She has been with the family nearly three years now, growing bigger and fatter all the time, and next month Pieter's mother is going to drive her to market, where she will sell easily at a good price. With part of the money, Pieter's mother will buy a younger and much cheaper cow, which she will keep until it has grown big enough to sell well.

PIETER OF BELGIUM

Pieter's mother is a wonder No housewife in all Belgium can make things go farther than she can—and Belgium is a land where everybody is thrifty And Suzanne, Pieter's cousin, is learning a great deal while she is staying at Pieter's home

It is time to take the cow home now, for evening is coming on Let us go with Pieter along the dusty road to the trim little brick house where he lives There it is at the bend of the road, and there is Suzanne coming out to meet us She, too, wears sabots Her blue skirt seems much too long for such a young girl Her tight little bodice is just as queer as the little white linen bonnet with strings dangling which she wears perched well at the back of her head She carries a long stick, for she has just been to fetch in the geese from the river-marshes

The cow is seen safely into its open shed The two grunting, squealing pigs that live in the brick sty on the other side of the yard are fed, and Pieter and Suzanne take us into the cottage for supper We are hungry and enjoy the soup and vegetables placed before us What delights us most is the sweet bread, made in long thick twisty sticks like cudgels There is cheese, too, made by Pieter's mother, and plenty of beautiful butter

A LABOURER'S FARM COTTAGE

We have not yet seen Pieter's father We ask after him, and are told that he is away all the week working on his master's big farm, and that he will not be home till Saturday afternoon We cannot help wondering how he manages to keep

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his own tiny farm in such trim order, until we find out what a lot of work Pieter's mother manages to do.

Around the house is land which is rented by the family. There is a vegetable garden; and the rest of the land is sown half with rye and half with potatoes. When the rye is harvested it is ground and mixed with wheat flour to make bread. The rye straw makes comfortable beds for the two pigs during the winter; and when the piggery and the cowshed are cleared out there is manure for field and garden. The geese bring in money too. So, although Pieter's father gets very small wages, the family contrive to live and save money every year.

Pieter's mother buys the cloth and other stuff for clothes, which she makes herself, and manages to clothe the whole family by her cleverness with the needle.

When the pigs are fat enough, one is sold in the market; the other is killed and salted down for the winter. When May comes, new young pigs are bought, and Pieter has a busy time watching them when he takes them out to feed on thistle-roots and other things they find in the fields.

The family are looking forward to the time when the tiny farm will become their own property. That is why they all work hard, and save every centime they can. They have done well so far, and Pieter's father is thinking of renting another piece of land on which he can grow hops—as several of his neighbours do. As you go through parts of Belgium in the train you see hop-field after hop-

PIETER OF BELGIUM

field—reminding you of the Kentish hop-fields at home, *only the land is flat and not beautiful.*

MARKET-DAY

On market-days Pieter's mother puts on her best dress and her finest apron. She twists her hair up tightly, drawing it back from her forehead, and fastening it so by means of two huge head ornaments of metal or pearl-shell. Pieter and Suzanne dress their neatest, and the three wait by the roadside until the farm wagon comes by. Then they beg a lift, and ride slowly in the lumbering wagon to market.

By the road runs a canal. Pieter and Suzanne love to watch the big black barges with bluff bows and round sterns. They always seem to the children so full of cargo that they are about to burst.

When they get to the market-place, the children are delighted to go round all the little umbrella-shaded stalls and see the treasures that are for sale. Pieter's mother goes first to that part of the great square where the cattle and pigs are being sold. Then she joins the children and makes a small purchase for the coming month.

Pieter loves to watch the clever dogs that pull little carts loaded with milk-cans or with vegetables. Suzanne likes this too. But she soon drags Pieter away to the pastry-cook's shop at the corner, where most wonderful cakes and even more wonderful tarts and pastries are to be seen. And seen they are by Pieter and Suzanne—but that is all; for they cost money, and are not for people who want to save as much as they can.

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A CHRISTMAS CUSTOM

In Pieter's part of Belgium they have a pretty Christmas custom.

At midnight on Christmas eve, they creep out and put upon the window-sill a piece of bread and a vessel of water, and in front of the stable a bundle of hay, and bless them all with a prayer. All this is done very quietly, and nobody dares to peep into the stable, for everyone knows that at that moment the cows are on their knees in the stalls in honour of Christmas morning, and that if any person sees the cattle in this position he will become blind.

On Christmas morning they find the bread, the water, and the hay all gone. Then they know that the fowls which have eaten the bread need not fear the fox, and that the cows which have eaten the hay will not eat poisonous herbs during the coming year.

CHAPTER IV

HENRIK OF DENMARK

HENRIK and his sister Anna live in a little village in Jutland, where a long, smooth green arm of the sea winds inland for so many miles that you might think it was a river until you found that its waters were salt

Jutland is part of Denmark, where our good friends the Danes live. The rest of the country consists of some big islands off the east coast, and a large number of small ones. If we wish to pay a visit to Henrik and Anna, we must cross the North Sea in one of the many fine steamers that make the passage once or twice every week. There are several English ports from which we may set sail—from London, or Harwich, or Hull, or the Tyne, or if we live in Bonnie Scotland we can start from Leith or Dundee, or, perhaps, from Aberdeen. It will be interesting for you to find the port which would be most convenient for you, and measure on your map the distance you would have to travel across the North Sea.

A famous writer once said, "In no country outside the British Empire will an Englishman feel so much at home as in Denmark." Danes and Englishmen seem to understand one another—

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which is not so very strange when we remember that many of us have Danish blood in our veins. In Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark, there is treasured up a famous letter written by Nelson, and addressed "The Brothers of Englishmen, the Danes."

HENRIK'S VILLAGE

Let us imagine that we have crossed the North Sea to Denmark, and that we are on the way across Jutland to the little village where Anna and Henrik live.

We cannot help noticing that the country is rather flat, but though there are no great mountains to give us splendid scenery, we delight in the sweet smelling meadows and golden cornfields, and the beautiful forests of beech. And when we come to the top of a tiny hill, and look through the tall columns of the beeches and long winding green arm of the sea, set here and there with little islands of a deeper green, and catch a glimpse of Henrik's village with its red roof and its little white church, we cannot help thinking what a pleasant land Denmark must be to live in.

As we go down to the village, we notice that it is much more scattered than country villages are in our own land. It seems to consist of clusters of farms and farm buildings dotted here and there over the countryside.

Henrik's house is in that quaint old farmstead nearest us. It is surrounded by green meadows and clumps of woodland. Soon we can see that the farm and its buildings are arranged very nearly in the



HONEY-CAKES AND PEPPER-CAKES

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

shape of a square ; there is the farm-house with its high thatched roof, and its stork's nest on the top of its biggest chimney. Opposite is the big barn in which Henrik's father stores corn and hay and roots for the cattle in winter, and at each side of the square are other lower buildings used as cart-sheds and cattle-sheds

HENRIK'S HOME

Henrik's home has a high steep roof, and low, whitewashed walls with dark oaken beams running across them. It is very old, and has belonged to the family for hundreds of years. Its close thatch is thick with ancient moss. In front is a trim garden, with flower-beds bordered by neat box edging, and a row of beehives.

Here is friend Henrik. He is dressed very much as a country boy would be in England, except that he wears wooden shoes. Anna is with him. Her long pigtail and linen cap, her wide skirts and embroidered bodice make us think of the little Dutch maidens we met when we went to Holland to see our friend Jan. But all the same, she is not very much different from our own country lasses. Years ago, the country folk of Denmark wore the national dress of their country, and very pretty it was, too. But they seem to have given this up in most places, though here and there one finds peasants who still wear the costumes of old Denmark.

Anna and Henrik ask us in. What a fine, roomy old house it is. Look at the enormous fireplace, with its spit for roasting, and the great black beams that support the ceiling. We cannot help wondering

HENRIK OF DENMARK

how the storks fare, who live on the top of the chimney, and we ask Henrik about it. Henrik soon tells us that nobody would dare to do anything which might injure a stork, and that in his own village alone there must be at least two or three hundred of them. He says that the storks are so tame that they will not bother even to get out of the way of a cart, but will go on stalking on their long, red stilts as if the road were made for them and not for humans! Luckily, the storks fly away to Africa when the winter comes, and do not mind having to build a new nest every year, so people can use their chimneys when they most want them. Winters are very cold in Denmark, but Henrik and Anna have great fun on the ice, and make up merry parties for sledging and skating.

WORK AND PLAY

The children's great delight is to go to the fair which is held in the town a few miles off, several times every year. Although people go to the fair from all the villages round to enjoy themselves, they do much business at the same time, for a big market forms part of the fair, and cattle and horses, pigs and poultry, butter and cheeses, and so forth, are brought in by the farmers for sale.

Henrik and Anna love to visit the cake-man's stall, where honey cakes and pepper-cakes, shaped like men, or animals, or trees, or boats, can be bought—all gay with coloured sugar and almonds.

Harvest-time, too, is great fun. Of course, there is plenty of hard work, but when the harvest

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is all gathered in, a great feast is held, with singing and dancing. The first sheaf is always set aside for the rats and mice, and the harvesters all sing—

“There little mouse—there is thine;
Let one keep the rest for mine!”

I suppose it is a kind of peace-offering to the rats and mice to prevent them eating the corn in the stacks. The last sheaf that is tied is decorated with flowers, and carried home at the head of a procession of all the harvesters, who call it the *Gamle* (old woman), or the *Enken* (widow).

At Whitsuntide and on Midsummer Eve, youths and maidens have all sorts of games, with dancing round great bonfires in the evening. Christmas is, of course, a happy time, with the frost and the snow to provide extra fun.

CHAPTER V

OLAF OF FAROE

OLAF is a Faroeman—and he is proud of it. If you tell him his country belongs to Denmark, he will say, "That may be so, but Denmark is hundreds of miles away across the sea, so it does not matter. Anyway, my ancestors came from Norway—not Denmark. They were the Vikings who were masters of the seas in their day."

And Olaf is right. The Faroe Islands lie far out from the Continent of Europe, hundreds of miles from the nearest mainland.

A VISIT TO FAROE

Faroe lies so far off the beaten track that few people visit it, and the Faroemen of the lonely little villages on the islands live much the same lives as their forefathers did two hundred years ago. If you look at a map of Europe you can see how we shall get there when we pay our visit to Olaf the Faroeman. Find Britain. Now find the Orkney Islands, north of Scotland, and then the Shetlands. Then look north west, and many miles away from the Shetlands are the Faroes. We may be lucky enough to catch a small trading steamer sailing out of Leith, or

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perhaps a fish-carrier that will take us to Thorshavn, the town of Faroe. And we may be lucky enough to have fine weather for the trip, but that is almost too much to expect, for very often storm winds howl around the Faroes, and the great waves thunder on their steep black cliffs, or the islands are shrouded in dense fog that makes it dangerous to come near the jagged rocks and islets which fringe the Faroe shores.

Let us suppose we have landed at Thorshavn. We do not think it a pretty town, and in many ways there is not much that is interesting to us there because the people are in touch with Norway, Denmark, and Scotland through the ships which come into its harbour. We are glad Olaf does not live here, because we want to see the real Faroe. So we set out on our way to Olaf's village.

We use the Faroeman's road—the Sea. After a few hours' rowing, the boatmen turn towards a jagged break in the high black cliffs where a little stream of clear water bubbles and trickles down to the sea. Soon we can see a cluster of houses on each side of the little stream, and the tiny wooden church with its little white steeple.

OLAF'S VILLAGE

We steer our way through jagged, broken rocks to the little stone causeway which Olaf's people have built for their boats to land at.

Look at the funny little black and white cottages. All have grass growing on their roofs—so has the church. That is because the roof is partly made of thick turf which keeps out the wet and the winter



OLAF IS ABSOLUTELY FEARLESS

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cold Those queer sheds of stones and turf are boat-shelters which are used for storing and repairing the boats in winter when the sea is too rough for fishing There is quite a long row of them along the beach

Almost every cottage has on its outer walls queer festoons of dried fish, net-floats, and long strips of curious black stuff which we discover is dried whale meat Here and there are sheds with turf roofs, and walls of split deals set five or six inches apart so that the air can pass in and out freely These are the sheds in which meat (mutton and whale) is dried Above the village, rounded black rocks rear their barren humps, and a little beyond rise grassy slopes on which we can see a few cattle, sheep, and ponies feeding

Let us go into Olaf's house at the foot of that steep black rock The fishermen have come back long since from the day's fishing, and women and girls are back from the little fields where they have been making hay from the scanty grass There is a strong smell of fish everywhere Even the fat ducks and geese seem to thrive on fish—or rather those parts of fish which the people do not eat See that old, old man with his face full of tiny wrinkles He is cutting up a hard black lump of something with his axe No! it is not wood—only dried whale meat which he is chipping up to make a nice stew for his cow!

Here come the milkmaids from the hills, with their wooden pails of milk slung from their shoulders by woollen ropes They are barefooted, and sing and knit all day when they are not actually milking

OLAF OF FAROE

cows, they are knitting and singing now as they trip down to the village

OLAF'S HOUSE

Here we are at Olaf's house with its grassy roof and little square box for a chimney. Olaf has already seen us and stands by the door to welcome us. Like most of the men and boys we have seen, Olaf is dressed in a jersey of soft brown wool, coarse woollen trousers, and clogs with soles of wood and uppers of tough sheepskin. He wears a curious woollen cap embroidered with stripes of red and blue. He is very pleased to see us, and asks us to go in. Before he enters the house he leaves his clogs outside the little door, and slips on a pair of soft sheepskin slippers, for his mother is very proud of her spotless floor of white deal planks which she is always scrubbing.

In the middle of the room is a cooking stove whose chimney goes up to the little box in the roof. Round the walls are wooden benches. A few stools complete the furniture. What interests us most is the big spinning-wheel in the corner, on which Olaf's mother spins the wool for the cloth she makes for clothes and blankets. She is very clever, as indeed are most Faroe women. She can spin, weave and dye, she can prepare and cure fish and meat, she can make leather from sheepskin and makes shoes from the leather. She can milk cows and make butter and cheese, she makes her own medicines, and doctors both her family and her animals when they are sick. We sleep this night in queer box beds which Olaf's mother pulls out of

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mysterious cupboards in the wall, and which she will put away again to morrow morning

OLAF'S WORK

Olaf takes his full share of the work of the village. His father is a farmer as well as a fisherman. Olaf tends cattle and sheep when they need it, he goes out in the boat catching cod, saithe, dog fish, skate, halibut, and other fish, he tends the peat fires under the great black cauldrons in which fish liver is simmering to make "cod liver oil."

What he likes best, however, is to go with his father to the bird cliffs across the bay, where millions of puffins, gannets, fulmars, and eider duck have their homes. He is absolutely fearless, and climbs about the precipices like a mountain goat. Sometimes his father lets him down over a cliff by means of a rope. He takes with him his bird net, fixed on a long pole, and scrambles along to where the puffins have their holes. As they fly up he catches them cleverly in the net. Birds are valuable to the Faroeman, their flesh is eaten, and so are their eggs, and their soft downy feathers are used for a number of purposes.

Whaling is another interesting job for Olaf. Whales are important to the Faroeman, for the oil feeds his lamps and the blubber his fires, the sinews he uses for string the skin for leather, and the flesh for food for himself, his dogs, and his cows. Even the little whale-bones are made into toys for his children.

The whales are still caught in these quiet bays in the old fashioned way. At certain seasons,

OLAF OF FAROE

“schools” of whales frequent the Faroe waters, and now and then the Faroemen manage to drive a whole “school” into the bay and kill them, with lances and knives. But more up-to-date whaling with steamers and harpoon guns is rapidly putting an end to the old way.

CHAPTER VI

MAGNUS OF ICELAND

FAR away out in the misty cold seas to the north-west of Europe lies a large island called Iceland. Its name almost makes us shiver, until we know that it does not really mean "The Land of Ice," but simply "The Island."

This island is the home of our friend Magnus, who has asked us to pay him a visit. He is very proud of his homeland, for it is bigger than Ireland, and very nearly as large as Ireland and Wales put together. Besides, Magnus comes of a famous race of Viking sea-rovers, who long ago were the terror of all Western Europe, and who found their way from Iceland to Greenland, and from Greenland to the mainland of America nearly five hundred years before Christopher Columbus made his famous discovery of the West Indies.

OFF TO ICELAND

To get to Iceland, we must first of all take train to Leith, the port of Edinburgh in Scotland. Here we find the mail-boat just setting out for the chief harbours in Iceland, and we start off at once on our voyage of more than eight hundred miles across the northern seas. We are lucky in another way, too,



MAGNUS LEADS THE WAY ON HIS PONY

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for the boat is not calling first at Faroe, where our friend Olaf lives, but is steering straight for
• Iceland

We have been steaming for two days when we can see, far away and high on the northern horizon, great snowclad peaks, which the captain tells us are the mountains of Iceland. Another day and a half goes by before we enter the harbour of Iceland's chief town, Reykjavik—a name which looks very hard to pronounce. But if you call it Rika-ya Vik you will not be far wrong. It means "the creek of smokes", and when we get to it we can see why, for a little distance inland are little columns of steam arising, which look very much like smoke. It is the steam from the hot springs which lie east of the town.

Our friend Magnus is waiting for us on the harbour side. He reminds us very strongly of Olaf of Faroe, both in his dress and in his looks. With him are four or five sturdy little ponies, with very long tails and thick rough coats.

ACROSS COUNTRY

Luckily for us, Magnus speaks a little English. His father, who is a farmer as well as a fisherman, often acts as guide to some of the few English visitors who spend their summer holiday in Iceland. After our greetings are over, we ask Magnus what the ponies are for. He laughs, and explains that his home lies many miles away, and that unless we wish to walk the whole distance, we must ride on ponies, for there are no railways in the island, and no 'buses or trains.

MAGNUS OF ICELAND

Magnus fastens our luggage on one of the ponies, piling it up on either side until the load seems bigger than the pony, which, however, doesn't seem to mind a bit. He sees us safely seated on pony-back, mounts himself, and we are off. Magnus leads the way on his pony; the others follow in single file, as if they were part of a procession.

We are glad when we leave the last of the little "tin" houses of Reykjavik behind, and follow a narrow track that leads to the open country. It is a fine clear day, and we can see far away the snowy peaks of some of Iceland's highest mountains. Accustomed as we are to the green and wooded countryside of Britain, we cannot help thinking how grey and barren much of Iceland seems, and we tell Magnus so. He cannot understand it, and points to a little farm in a valley not far away with its patches of green around it, and a little wood of birch trees close by. "Here it is green enough," he says; "but if you wish to see real barren land, you should go farther inland, where the whole countryside as far as you can see is a plain of grey, black, or red lava, on which nothing grows save patches of rough brushwood and a stunted tree or two."

Lava makes us think of volcanoes. Of course, Iceland is a land of volcanoes—some dead, some dying, but many active. Hundreds of square miles in Iceland are covered with lava poured out in past years by the great volcanoes. There, far away on the right, is Hekla, with its triple peaks—one of the biggest volcanoes in Iceland. We fancy we can see a dark wisp of smoke wreathing slowly from the middle peak. Not only volcanoes, but

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hot springs of boiling water and mud, and geysers, or spouting springs, that shoot high columns of boiling water into the air, are to be seen in many places. Now we are on the lava. What horrible stuff it is! It is grey and black, and looks as if some giant fire had melted it, burnt it, cracked it, and scarred it. It was once molten rock that welled up through the crater of one of the great volcanoes. The going is so rough that we wonder how ever the ponies can keep their footing upon it. But surefooted as goats, they keep on at a steady pace, leaping over big cracks, ambling easily along slippery paths, or splashing unconcernedly through the icy blue water of the many streams that come from the big glaciers on the mountain slopes.

MAGNUS'S HOME

Now we can see the sea again, and down in that little green valley is Magnus's home. It is built of corrugated iron (which many people call "tin" for short), for it is new. Beside it is a row of grassy mounds, with what look like little black boxes on top. From each little box smoke is rising, for it is the chimney, and each mound is a room, or perhaps a whole house.

Magnus points with pride to the new house, and tells us that before it was built the family lived in the old house beneath the grassy mounds. When we get nearer, we see that each mound has a wooden front, in which tiny windows are set. Around are other mounds, some of which serve as stables for the ponies, folds for the sheep, drying-houses for fish, and barns for hay and barley.

MAGNUS OF ICELAND

During the cold winter, the turf which makes mounds of these little houses keeps them cosy and warm. The furniture is very rough, and there is not much of it. But what takes our fancy most are the wonderful old carved wooden chests—some painted in many bright colours, some so old and brown that they might have served Magnus's sea king ancestors of long ago.

We have a talk with Magnus's father and mother, and after a supper of curds and fish and ewes' milk and bread, are glad to creep into the funny beds that look like big boxes filled with clothes.

We wish we could stay longer to see all the strange things that Magnus tells us about next day—especially the geyser that spouts a 100-foot column of water into the air if you throw thirty or forty pounds of soap down it. That geyser hates soap as much as some dirty boys we know of. 'Why, I can't tell you, any more than I can explain why some boys hate soap.'

Magnus's father has many sheep, most of which run wild over the hills all summer, mixing with the sheep of other farmers. When autumn comes the sheep are driven home to the folds for the winter. 'How do the farmers sort them out?' you ask. Quite easily. Each farmer makes a cut of a certain shape in the ears of all his sheep, and often brands his initials on their horns as well. The sheep we notice in summer near the house are the ewes kept there for milking. Sheep provide flesh and wool, milk and cheese.

Sea birds give the Icelanders eggs, meat, and

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warm, soft feathers They live in millions on the coast and on the rocky islands, and are snared and caught in nets on long poles, just as they are in the Faroes Feathers and down of the eider duck are sent away to other countries

Magnus has great tales to tell, too, of fishing for cod and halibut, and of seal-hunting, in which he takes his share, like all true Icelandic boys

CHAPTER VII

SVEND OF NORWAY

SVEND and his sister Hulda live in a land which is so rugged that more than half the country is filled with high mountains. Dark forests cover nearly a quarter of it besides, so there is not much land left for farming.

THE FARM

Yet Svend and Hulda live on a farm. Of course, it lies snugly in the valley at the foot of the mountains, but even there there is not much room for growing things. Besides, the winters are very long and the summers very short. So on their tiny fields the farmers grow barley, rye, and oats, which do not need so much warm sun as wheat; and potatoes, and fruits such as apples and pears and gooseberries. Though summers are short, the summer days are much longer than ours, and although the sun is not so high in the sky as in England, it shines more hours every day and thus helps fruit and grain to get ripe.

Much more important to Svend's father are the cows, which graze on the grassy mountain-slopes and give rich milk from which large quantities of butter and cheese can be made. They seem small cows to us. They are usually dun-coloured, and they

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are very tame, although, like Swiss cows, they spend all the summer on the high slopes and rarely see anyone except the farmer and his children. These tiny cows often yield between 800 and 900 gallons of milk a year each. No wonder Svend's father thinks much of them.

Let us take a peep at the farm. It is a good one, for Svend's father is better off than most people in his valley. It consists of a number of buildings grouped closely together, so that it is easy to get from one to another in winter when the snow lies deep and white. Here is the living-house, which is built of wood upon a strong foundation of great stones. The roof is heavy, and has wide eaves like Swiss farm-houses. There is one large room and a little one downstairs; upstairs are two small ones—one for Hulda and one for Svend. The big room downstairs is kitchen, dining-room, and drawing-room all in one. There is no paper on the walls, which are of good polished wood. The smaller room beside it is the farmer's bedroom.

Close by is the out-kitchen, a little building in which Svend's mother and Hulda do the baking, the brewing, and the washing in summer. If you could peep in now you would see them making the *fladbrød*—Norwegian bread. They roll out the barley-oatmeal dough on a big board until it is very thin and makes a sort of cake about a yard across. Then they bake it on an iron griddle kept hot by glowing embers beneath it. They make much more than they want for the present; they store the *fladbrød* up for the winter.

A little farther away is the storehouse, which is



HILDA WORKS AT A MOUNTAIN DAIRY

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raised on stout wooden legs, and has big cupboards in which meal, salt fish, salt meat, blankets, sheepskins, and other things are stored for winter use. Around the walls you can see the *fladbrød* stacked in big piles

The other buildings are larger, and are used for sheltering the little dun cows and the sturdy little horses, or for storing away the precious hay for the long dark winter

AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

We wonder why we have not yet seen Svend and Hulda. It is because Svend has gone to pay a visit to Hulda and her friends, who are working in the *saeter* or mountain dairy high up among the mountains. All farmers' daughters do this in summer, living far from their homes and making butter and cheese, gathering hay, or embroidering linen and knitting stockings

Let us climb up the rocky mountain path to the *saeter*. It is a stiff climb, and takes us nearly the whole day, for the *saeter* is more than ten miles from the farm in the valley. We climb up by the side of roaring torrents and beautiful waterfalls, through dark forests of pine and fir, until we come to steep, grassy slopes where the cows are grazing. That queer rough little house is the *saeter*, with sheds and folds around it for the cattle.

Here is Hulda, with laughing blue eyes and two big plaits of flaxen hair. She wears a bodice of spotless white, and over it a sleeveless velvet jacket richly embroidered in many colours. A blue skirt

SVEND OF NORWAY

of coarse woollen stuff reaches just below her knees, and she wears thick, heavy, nailed shoes because of the rocky paths. Svend stands beside her. He is dressed in a thick, buttonless, sleeved coat, an embroidered waistcoat with a broad belt studded with silver ornaments, and knickerbockers, stockings of grey wool, and heavy boots.

They tell us that, although they live up here all the summer, it is very jolly and very healthy. They never feel lonely because there are many of them, and they are always busy. They ask us to stay with them a day or two. Inside the *saeter* there is only rough furniture, but it serves its purpose.

Svend takes us next day to a spot where he is mowing hay. It looks very dangerous, for he works on a slope that ends in a precipice. When he has cut a good load, he places it in a big net and carries it along to where a long thick wire of galvanised iron runs right down to the valley. He hooks on the bundle of hay, and it disappears over the precipice. If we were in the valley we should see it sliding down swiftly. Now we know the meaning of the many stout wires we noticed running up from the valley into the mountains. They are not telephone wires after all!

When the hay gets to the bottom it is "hung out to dry" on frames like big clothes horses, or on long fences, or on poles. It would never dry properly if left on the ground. And every scrap of hay is precious, for there is never much in this mountainous land.

High above us, we can see great snowy peaks that seem to touch the sky, and on the slopes are

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enormous glaciers—"rivers" of solid ice—from whose melting ends thousands of torrents run down into the valley, making music all the way

THE FJORDS

Svend tells us he is about to visit his uncle who lives by the sea, and he invites us to go with him. After a long journey over the mountains in a queer two wheeled cart, we come down to the sea. We can hardly believe it is the sea, for the water is as smooth as a lake. It is narrow, too, and hemmed in by giant rocky walls, for the mountains seem to come straight down into it. Svend tells us that the water is tremendously deep, and that this is really one of the million long narrow arms of the sea that you find along the coast of Norway. He calls it a *fjord*, and says that, if we wanted to get to the open sea, we should have to sail away down the *fjord* for nearly a hundred miles.

The house of Svend's uncle stands on a little bit of level land by the *fjord*, for he is both a farmer and a fisherman, as we can see by the tall racks filled with fish split open and drying in the sun. There is not much room for farming, so fishing takes first place. Look at that boat! Does it not remind you of the "long dragons" in which Svend's ancestors came across the North Sea to plunder the rich lands of eastern England? Its shape is the same, though it is not nearly so large as the old Norse galleys. And Svend's uncle is a giant, with fair hair and beard, who looks just like a Viking of old.

We have arrived in time for a local festival, and are invited to take part in the dancing and

CHAPTER VIII

GUSTAV OF SWEDEN

BY the green waters of a long winding lake there is a little village whose houses of red and green and white face the rising sun. Behind them, green meadows slope up to the edge of the forest, where the spruces and pines grow so thickly that they look like an army of spearmen climbing the hillsides.

In this little village lives our friend Gustav, who is named after the most famous king of Sweden. Gustav's brother is called Klas, after Klas Horn, the great Swedish naval hero, and his little sister's name is Gudrun.

OFF TO SWEDEN

If we wish to visit Gustav, Klas, and Gudrun, we must be prepared for a voyage across the North Sea to Goteborg, a large port in south west Sweden. When we reach Goteborg, we can either go by train to Stockholm, the Swedish capital, or we can go by canal, river, and lake, or we can stay on our ship and reach Stockholm by way of the Baltic Sea. Which-ever way we go, we must allow about three days for the journey.

When we reach Stockholm, we still have a long way to go. We travel by rail many miles to the



GUSTAV'S MOTHER SPINNING

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north west, until we come to the nearest rail town to Gustav's village. The rest of the journey is by road, or by boat along the lake.

Perhaps we shall be a little disappointed on first reaching Sweden to find that the people are dressed very much like English people, except in winter time, when they must wear very warm clothing because of the stinging cold. But as we go farther away from the big towns, we begin to meet with people who still wear the picturesque costumes of Sweden—the old national dress of the Swedish peasantry. However, even in the remote countryside, the old Swedish dress is fast disappearing, and even the poorest country folk prefer the clothes which are worn by European peoples everywhere. Only on festive occasions do they wear the pretty dresses and picturesque costumes which we sometimes see in illustrated books on Sweden or on picture postcards.

Our friend Gustav, however, lives in a village so far away from the big towns that people there still wear wooden shoes instead of the leather ones to which we are accustomed, and the women still wear the white embroidered caps, laced velvet bodices, full white linen sleeves, and wide striped aprons of many colours, which Swedish peasants have worn for ages.

GUSTAV AT HOME

Gustav's people are farmers and foresters. Gustav's home is made of wood from the forest on the hill, set on a firm foundation of stone. His great grandfather built it. Then it consisted

GUSTAV OF SWEDEN

of one great room, which served as kitchen, living-room, and bedroom, too. Around the yard in which it stood were the cowhouse, the stable, the thrashing-floor, and the granary for storing the oats, barley, and rye after the harvest. To day the house is much bigger—it has had four or five other rooms added to it, some by Gustav's grandfather and some by his own father.

The low roofs are painted bright red, and the windows are picked out from the white walls in bright green. The furniture inside is plain, but strong and useful. The pride of Gustav's mother is the great high backed dresser, on whose shelves stand wonderful plates and vessels of copper and white metal that have been in the family for hundreds of years.

Gustav and Gudrun come out to welcome us. Gustav wears knee-breeches, thick stockings, and wooden shoes. He is in his shirt sleeves, for he has been at work in the cowhouse. Gudrun wears out-of-doors a cap of dark material, with a white embroidered band around it, a beautifully embroidered white bodice with full white sleeves, and a dark woollen skirt with a wide apron striped with blue and red. We ask for Klas, and Gudrun tells us he is at work in the forest, helping the men slide the big logs of spruce and pine down the flume into the lake, and promises that we shall go up to where they are at work, to see how it is done.

LOGGING IN SWEDEN

Pine and spruce and aspen are the chief trees in these thick forests. Pine and spruce are cut up

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in the big sawmills, and made into planks, window-frames, door frames, and other wooden parts of houses, or into furniture. Aspen is in great demand for making matches—a great Swedish industry, as everybody knows who has ever looked at a match-box. Aspen is soft, and splits easily into the fine splints which the match manufacturer must have for his matches.

When we go up to the forest, we are disappointed to find that no tree felling is being done. All the men are busily working at dragging, rolling, and levering the cut logs into a big trough, or "flume" of running water, which carries the timber by a winding way to the lake. The flume is made of wood, and is held up by stout trestles. From where we stand, we can see it descending the steep slope in long, winding loops, until it is lost in the lower levels. It is full of gliding logs, all swiftly making their way down to the lake. Gustav tells us that men are on the watch all the way down to see that the logs do not "jamb" and block the channel. Sometimes, in spite of this, a jamb takes place, and the channel is dammed by a huge pile of logs, which grows in height every second as more logs come floating down to it. Then the job is for the men to find the "key log"—the one log which, when pulled out, will release the whole. This is a difficult and a dangerous task.

When the timber reaches the lake, the logs are made into rafts and are towed by a little tug to the great sawmill 30 miles away, where a giant waterfall provides power for its great circular saws and for electric lighting.

GUSTAV OF SWEDEN

Most of the timber is cut in winter, when the snow makes it easy for the men to move the big logs about on sledges. If there is not enough snow on some of the logging roads, water is poured on until they are covered with a thick coating of ice. Along these ways the logs are moved to the side of the flume, so that when spring comes and the water begins running, they may be carried down to the lake.

Timber cutting begins in October and lasts all through the winter, when little or no farming work can be done, and men have more time to devote to the work.

SPORT IN SWEDEN

Winter is the time for sport. Then the green lake is covered with a glass like sheet of ice, and the sloping meadows are deep in snow. Both Gustav and Gudrun go out with Klas on long skating expeditions, or they get out their big ice-yacht, which glides over the smooth ice as fast as an aeroplane.

They all love "skate-sailing" too. They carry, fastened to their back and shoulders, a big rectangular sail, which they can shift from side to side according to the direction of the wind, and which whirls them along before a stiff breeze with the speed of a motor car.

The ice-yacht looks just like a huge cross of wood, with steel runners under the ends of its arms and under the end of the long "upright." It has a tall mast, on which is mounted a big mainsail and a foresail. It can go faster than the fastest

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express train. When it turns, one arm and runner swing high in the air.

On the snow-slopes there is "skid-running," or ski-ing—just like the ski-ing they practise in Norway, the sister country to Sweden.

CHAPTER IX

NILS OF FINLAND

NILS lives among the pine forests of the "Land of a Thousand Lakes" He is a Finn, and belongs to a strange nation whose history goes far back towards the beginning of things Although Nils's people have lived in Europe for many hundreds of years, their first home was far away to the east in distant Asia So they are different in many ways from the other nations of Europe

NILS'S VILLAGE

Suppose we could spread our magic carpet and command it to take us to the Land of a Thousand Lakes where Nils lives Away we should go across the North Sea to Norway and its snowy mountains, then across forest-clad Sweden, and the long northern arm of the island-studded Baltic, and there below us would be the thousand lakes of wonderful Finland, set in the dark forests of pines

Nils's tiny village is by the canal which runs from the open sea through the forest to one of the biggest lakes in Finland You can go hundreds of miles through Finland by water, for canals join lake to lake and river to river The waterways are the best roads and the longest

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

There are six little red-painted wooden cottages by the canal lock. They are built of rough logs. Their bright red walls, black roofs, and snow-white window frames make them look like toy houses. Each has a big doorway with one room on one side of it and on the other another room. The cottage farthest from us is Nils's home, you can tell it by the white cage which hangs in the window, and which is the little house of Nils's pet bird. The other little windows have green plants peeping out between the clean white curtains.

That is Nils standing at the doorway, watching the long narrow tar boats going through the lock. The tar is made from the forest-trees, and is brown and sticky instead of black and sticky like ordinary tar. Peep down into one of the boats and notice that not a single nail or piece of metal is used in making it, it is fastened together with stout wood fibre, which is the only thing that will stand the terrible wrenching power of the rapids through which the boats have to pass on some of the rivers. In the boat are twenty heavy barrels of tar, see how deep in the water she is. Her crew consists of two men forward, two women among the barrels in the middle, and one man at the stern who steers.

But let us go and make the acquaintance of Nils. He wears the fur cap which every Finn seems to wear, a sort of loose coat with wide sleeves made of rough thick, woollen material, white woollen trousers. His feet are bare and brown. His skin is much darker than ours, and it looks darker than it really is, because the colour of his hair is so light that it looks nearly white, and his eyes are of the palest



NILS AND MINNA GO TO CHURCH BY BOAT

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

blue He looks very solemn Most Finns do when they are thinking Perhaps it is because they belong to such a very old race of people But as soon as he finds that we have come to visit him, he is all smiles, and waves his hand as if he were saying "Good bye!" instead of "How do you do?"

NILS'S HOUSE

He takes us inside the cottage His sister Minna, who is talking to her grandmother, rises to greet us Her fair hair hangs in broad double plaits down her back She wears a scarlet bodice, and a short striped skirt, below which appear her slim ankles, and naked feet burned a dark brown by the hot summer sun Only during the long dark winter does she wear shoes

Grandmother is very old Her face is seamed with multitudes of fine wrinkles, but it is a kind and even a noble face She knows hundreds of the strange stories which the Finns love to tell in the long winter evenings, and hundreds of queer charms which are to be said on special occasions

Look around the room! Walls and ceilings are of wood, unpolished and unpainted, and spotlessly clean So is the floor, whose wood is worn almost as smooth as glass by the constant polish produced by the bare feet of its owners An enormous stove of brick takes up a great deal of room Beside it is a huge, lugh, wooden dresser upon which are brightly burnished copper utensils—the treasures of the family In the middle of the room is a square table on heavy trestles A few roughly fashioned chairs and a carved stool or two complete the furniture—

NILS OF FINLAND

save for grandmother's bed, which we do not notice at first, because it is folded up and placed in a sort of big cupboard in the wall

We ask for Nils's father, and learn that he is busy at the great pulp mill which eats up the forest trees with an appetite that is never satisfied and turns out barrel after barrel of messy pulp, which will soon be made into paper and cardboard

THE NIAGARA OF FINLAND

We spend the night at the cottage, although there is so little room for us that Nils and Minna have to sleep on the floor. Next morning Nils tells us he is going to show us the most wonderful sight in all Finland

We walk ten or twelve miles through the forest by narrow paths, until we begin to fear that we are lost. The dark pines shut us in a gloom that makes us afraid without our quite knowing why. Besides, we remember that there are bears and wolves in Finland!

Then suddenly we become aware of a sound that we have really heard for some time. It is a dull booming roar, which grows ever louder, until, as we emerge from the shelter of the pines, it bursts into a deafening thunder. Nils dashes forward, and we follow excitedly to where he stands pointing downwards to a mighty river that roars and foams in giant rapids below us. It is Imatra, the "Niagara of Finland."

Imatra fights her thunderous way through a long, narrow passage between granite walls. Her billows foam and surge, they wrestle and leap like

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

struggling giants, then fall in a cloud of spray and a whirl of waters that frightens and fascinates us at one and the same time

When we draw our unwilling eyes from this wonderful sight and gaze across to the opposite bank, we see a great hotel that has been built to shelter the countless tourists who come to visit Imatra. Somehow that hotel seems out of place. In spite of its size, it seems a tawdry and an insignificant human toy against the mighty Imatra that thunders by it.

GOING TO CHURCH

Nils asks us if we will stay over Sunday, and is disappointed to find we cannot. He tells us it is fine fun going to church on Sundays. He and his friends go by boat, for it is better to go a dozen miles by water in this part of Finland than to try the short cut by land over the very bad roads.

In the old days, every village had its church boat. Some of them were big enough to carry a hundred people, and were rowed by twenty pairs of oars.

Nobody dreams of going to church dressed in colours. Black is the proper dress. White is the colour of mourning. Women wear black silk coverings on their heads on Sundays, instead of the gay head dresses they use on holidays.

Everybody wears goloshes on holidays and Sundays. But people always take them off before entering any building. You can see a row of them outside the church, each with its big brass initials on the inside of the sole, so there can be no mistake as to its ownership.

NILS OF FINLAND

THE FINLAND WINTER AND SUMMER

Winters are long and dark in the "Land of a Thousand Lakes" Six months of bitter cold, and of long black nights! Six feet of snow on the roads, thick ice on lake, canal, and stream, and even on the sea! Wheels are taken from the carts and bright steel runners put in their places to turn the carts into sledges

Although it is a long way across the Baltic Sea from Finland to Sweden, there are seen regular ice roads from one country to the other No farming can be done Nils and Minna spend long hours indoors helping grandmother spin wool, or father in his carving and mending and making things Outside is the bitter frost and the winter silence

After April spring comes The snow and ice melt as if by magic, beautiful flowers spring up everywhere, the birds sing, and the dark black forest puts on a new and tender robe of green

As the summer approaches, the days become longer and hotter, until you can hardly bear the heat of the sun at noonday, and the nights are so short that it is never really dark This is the time when the Finnish farmers grow their scanty supplies of oats and rye, their vegetables, and, in the south, their orchard fruit The sun is so brilliant and the heat so great that the grain is sown and harvested in the short space of twelve or fourteen weeks

Nils and Minna love the summer days when they can go barefoot through the forest gathering rich stores of juicy wild strawberries, raspberries, cranberries, and other ripe fruits

CHAPTER X

IVAN OF RUSSIA

RUSSIA is still the easiest country to find on the map of Europe, for although several new states have been formed along its borders since the war, Russia is still Europe's biggest country

Russia is so large that it contains many different kinds of people and many different kinds of climate. Our friend Ivan lives amid the great forests of the north, where summers are short and winters are very long and very cold. But he has friends living on the plains of the south-east, where a terrible famine has been raging for many months, and where people are dying in thousands of slow starvation or of the dreadful diseases that famine brings. Ivan has heard nothing of his friends for a very long time, and sometimes thinks that he may never hear from them again. He thinks himself a lucky boy because he happens to live in a part of Russia where there is no famine. Life is hard, certainly, and food is none too good and none too plentiful, but those who work can live.

THE NORTHERN FOREST

Ivan, his brother Nicolai, and his little sister Katarina live in a little village in the midst of the



THE ROAD THROUGH THE FOREST

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THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

southern part of the great forest land that covers nearly the whole of the northern half of Russia. Here and there are open clearings where there are fields and villages ; but most of the land is covered with dense forest in which the new-comer easily loses himself directly he leaves the road.

As you go along the forest edge, or through it by road, you can easily understand why Ivan and his fellow-villagers look upon the forest as a place full of mysteries, and why they tell tales of terrible beings who inhabit the dark woods and spring out upon passers-by to carry them off. Every villager knows, too, that the forest is the home of the *leshie*, or wood-sprite, and that often the *domovoi*, or brownie, pops out of the woods and plays all sorts of pranks in one's house, after everybody has gone to bed.

The forest, too, is the home of the wolves, which in winter gather together in bands and hunt in company. Woe betide the traveller who is overtaken by these gaunt, hungry beasts ! He stands little chance of escaping them, even if he is well armed, for even if he shoots ten or a dozen there are hundreds more.

But the forest has its gifts for the villager as well as its terrors. It gives him timber for his house and his cart and his sledge ; it gives him ripe berries in autumn and nuts as well ; it gives him, too, the thick furs which shield him from the winter cold—for the forest is the home of many fur-bearing animals which are easily trapped when the snow lies thick upon the ground and food is scarce.

The little fields in the open spaces around the villages provide the villager with rye for his black

IVAN OF RUSSIA

bread, and for his *kvass*—a kind of beer, with potatoes, and with pasture for his few cows and horses, and for his poultry. Ivan and his family live chiefly on black bread, milk, cheese, eggs and tea. The tea comes all the way from China by land, and is very dear. It is not in packets like the tea we buy, but is pressed together in thick flat cakes, making what is known as "brick tea." In winter and summer, the big *samovar*, or tea urn, is always ready, for Ivan's people are great tea drinkers.

IVAN'S VILLAGE

We should find it a long and toilsome journey to Ivan's village. First, there would be a three or four days' voyage by sea, then a slow journey over a wretched railway which has more or less gone to pieces since the war, and which sometimes has a train running—more often not.

If we were lucky, we might reach a little wayside station whence we could continue our journey in summer in a rough cart over rougher roads that would jolt us almost to bits. This cart is called a *tarantass*. It is drawn by three horses—one between the shafts, which are connected by a high horseshoe-shaped *duga*, or arch, rising above the horse's collar and bearing a bell, and the other two horses outside the shafts—one on each side. The cart itself is just a big wooden box on wheels, with hay strewn over its bottom and a big arched tilt or cover to keep out the wet.

In winter, travel would be easier, for then we could go by sledge over the hard snow. But the cold in winter is severe and travellers must wrap up in thick

IVAN OF RUSSIA

IVAN'S HOME

The house is built of rough forest logs cleverly fitted together at their ends. A small wooden porch shelters the front door. We go in and find ourselves in a small room with two tiny square windows and a low wooden ceiling. Opposite is a triangular shelf, upon which stands the *ikon*, or sacred picture, with its little oil lamp hanging before it. In the corner, taking up a huge portion of the floor space, is an enormous brick stove, cleanly whitewashed, from whose top a great wooden shelf extends to the nearest wall. This shelf is the family bed, which is kept warm in winter by the heat of the great stove.

As for furniture—all we can see is a long wooden bench fixed along one of the walls, a big rough table, and a wooden stool or two. Still, the stout wooden house is warm and snug in winter, and that is all that matters.

The peasant's farm work begins with the melting of the snows in April, when the spring comes with a suddenness that would surprise us if we could see it.

On St. George's Day the cattle are brought out from their winter sheds for the first time, and are sprinkled with holy water by the village priest. By the end of May the land is ready for sowing the grain. Haymaking comes about the end of June. Then in August comes the busiest time of the year, when the peasant and his wife and family must work day and night to harvest the scanty crop of rye or oats. When the harvest is gathered in there will be a great village feast and general rejoicing.

CHAPTER XI

VLADISLAV OF UKRAINE

VLADISLAV and Katerina, his sister, live in the south western part of Russia. Their land is called the "Ukraine," or Little Russia, and they belong to a race of people who are just as proud of their independence as are the Swiss mountaineers. But for many hundreds of years before the war, they were subjects of the Tsar of Russia, who kept them in order by force. When Russia became a republic, and parts of it set up governments of their own, the Ukraine was one of the first to do so, though many things have happened since then to disturb the country. For like the great Russia, Little Russia is far from settled, and I fear that Vladislav and Katerina are very poor and very unhappy to day.

VLADISLAV'S LAND

Let us take a peep at Vladislav's home-land as it was before all these troubles came upon it.

Imagine a wide stretch of open plain that reaches to the skyline in every direction. Long ago it was covered with rich grass that grew so tall that a horse-man riding across it had to stand upon the back of his horse to see which way he was going. But when people settled there, they turned the rich



HARVEST IN THE LARAINÉ

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HARVEST IN THE UKRAINE

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

grasslands into farms where they grew fine crops of wheat and maize, or into pastures on which they fed great herds of cattle, droves of horses, and flocks of sheep and goats. Of all the great wide lands of Russia, the rich country of the Ukraine was the most fertile.

This great natural grassland is called the "steppes", but the Ukraine steppe is far richer than the steppe that lies to the east of it, where the land is nearly a desert. The Ukraine steppeland in the south borders on the Black Sea, where lie several big ports which in better days used to send away hundreds of thousands of bushels of fine grain. Some of it used to come to England.

If you go northward from the Black Sea right across the broad level steppes, you come at last to the pine forests which lie in the northern part of the Ukraine. These forests are only a sorry part of the great forests which once were there, all the rest has been cut down.

VLADISLAV'S VILLAGE

In this great, solemn, quiet plain, towns are separated from one another by enormous distances, and even the villages are very far apart. It is a lonely, silent country, and we are not at all surprised when we hear that the Little Russians have very many strange legends and tales about mysterious beings who inhabit the lonely places.

Vladislav's village lies along the banks of a little river that wanders slowly across the steppe, for in this dry land it is important to live where there is a good supply of water for man and beast.

VLADISLAV OF UKRAINE

We can see where the village is, long before we come to it, for a host of big windmills scattered all along the riverside tells us a village is there. Some are still, and their great tattered sails tell their own story. But many are whirling their great arms round and round to the song of the steppe wind. They are all built of wood, none of them is painted, but all are weathered to silver-grey by the winter storms.

Here is the first house in the village. It is made of wood, and is painted a bright red and yellow, but it is only a sort of cabin, and not very big. Around it are a few tumble-down barns and cattle-sheds. It is evidently the home of poor people.

We have to go a long way before we reach the next house, for the village straggles for miles along the stream banks—and Vladislav's house is the last of all. We are tired of riding in our rough carriage, for the way is very jolty because the road is so bad. Our horse looks tired, too, as he peeps under the great arched wooden yoke that Russians have from shaft to shaft above their horse's neck. We cannot help thinking that the horse must like winter time best, because then the carriage is changed into a sleigh by taking off the wheels and putting on steel runners which glide easily and swiftly over the hard snows.

VLADISLAV AND KATERINA

Here is Vladislav's house. We can tell it by its bright blue front. Besides, there is Vladislav in his tall fur cap and knee-boots, and his thick coat of sheep skin with the wool turned inside. With him is Katerina, who is dressed in a short red skirt

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THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

with a border embroidered in many colours, a white bodice, and white head dress. Around her neck she wears several necklaces of large beads in bright colours. She has run out of the house to look at us. Vladislav has just come back from the sheep pastures, and has only a minute or two ago put his fine horse in its stable.

We go indoors with them to pay our respects to their father and mother. Directly we enter the living room, we cannot help noticing the great stove of enamelled brick which takes up so much room. The furniture is rough and simple. In a corner near one of the little white windows is the picture of a saint framed in a gorgeous frame. It is the sacred *ikon*, and in this corner the family say their prayers night and morning. All the steppe dwellers of the Ukraine are very religious, and the children are already looking forward to making a pilgrimage to the holy city of Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. At Kiev they hope to kiss the sacred *ikon* which has been there for hundreds of years, and which receives the pious kisses of a hundred thousand devout Ukrainians every year. It is a picture painted on cypress wood, and black with age, but every line on it is marked with precious stones.

LIFE IN THE UKRAINE

From Vladislav and Katerina we learn many interesting things.

First about feast days and holidays. These are great fun, for then everyone is dressed in his very best and there are great feasts, and music, and

VLADISLAV OF UKRAINE

dancing Katerina and her girl friends wear their best skirts embroidered in many bright colours, and have long ribbons of bright pink or blue or red fastened in their hair. Often they wear crowns of flowers—real ones in summer, and artificial ones in winter. All their best necklaces are brought out, and well to do maidens wear half a dozen or more at once.

Vladislav says that it is not only the girls who look pretty on holidays, the boys do their best in that way, too! He shows us a fine shirt which has a front beautifully embroidered in blue and red, and a wonderful pair of high boots made of soft red leather.

Houses are dressed up, too. The *ikon* shelf is decorated with paper flowers and tinsel, and bands of striped or check material in red and white are hung round the walls of the guest room.

In spring, the great steppes are a sea of many beautiful shades of green, for then the crops are coming up. Here and there are broad patches of beautiful flowers—all wild. It seems wicked to walk on them, as you often have to do. If you stand on that little hill, and look around you, you can see a vivid square of scarlet tulips in one place, a brilliant patch of yellow in another, of purple in a third, and so on.

As summer comes, the green changes into gold as the wheat and maize ripen, and the steppe breezes blow across a yellow sea of grain, making waves of brilliant light. Then comes harvest, when everyone turns out to gather in the golden store. The great windmills whirl their arms merrily as they grind the

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

corn into flour, and every farmer is busy sending his sacks of grain to the nearest mill and fetching away the precious flour which must last him until next harvest.

Then comes autumn, when the steppe is a drear waste of grass dried brown, or of stubble burned almost black by the sun. Roads are deep in fine dust, and the steppe-wind raises it in choking clouds as you pass along.

Winter brings the snow, and soon the whole great plain is one vast expanse of dazzling white. It is terribly cold, and Vladislav and Katerina put on thick fur coats and caps and stout leather boots when they go out. Indoors, everyone crowds around the great stove, and the *samovar*, or tea-urn, hisses and bubbles all day long. This is the time for fairy-stories and ghost-stories—many of which would frighten you terribly if I dared tell you them. This is the time, too, for music and song. The Little Russians love music, and have many beautiful folk songs which they delight in singing together. The story-teller, too, makes his way across the snow from house to house and from village to village—always sure of a hearty welcome.

CHAPTER XII

STANISLAW OF POLAND

IT is market day. In the open space in the middle of the old city are rows upon rows of stalls, each with a little shelter of coloured cloth, for the sun is hot. Behind each stall stand women with shawls of many colours thrown loosely over green velvet jackets sewn with sequins and beads, and wearing short wide skirts of thin material with a pretty flowered pattern. Many wear wonderful necklaces of white and red beads—for white and scarlet are the colours of their national flag.

Let us peep at the stalls and see what they are selling. There are bowls and tall jars, pans and wooden pitchers holding milk, cheese, vegetables, poultry, curds, and long strings of withered looking toadstools, or mushrooms. Open spaces in between the stalls are filled with people—women gay in their coloured shawls and men in long coats of blue, or white and scarlet, all making a wonderful blaze of colour.

STANISLAW

There is a fine little fellow standing by that stall with the red and orange canopy. He is talking to a tall, thin man who is very gaily dressed.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

in a wide cloak embroidered in scarlet and sequins, and a cap of scarlet trimmed with black curly wool and adorned with a bunch of peacock's feathers. As he moves his cloak flies open and shows a great deep belt of leather thickly studded with plates of brass and knobs of silver. The boy is dressed in a long cloak or coat of royal blue which falls below the knee, and is tucked in at the back in what our elder sisters call "box pleats." He wears top boots of beautiful soft scarlet leather, into which he has tucked the ends of rather wide, full trousers. As he talks to the tall man he smiles. They are old friends.

The boy's name is Stanislaw. He lives in a small village in Poland not far from the great mountains and forests in the south of that country, but a very long way from the sea, which lies to the north. He and Casimir have come in from the country to market. Casimir drove in some fine visitors who had been staying at the great house. Stanislaw came in with a wagon load of vegetables and milk from the farm. Casimir rode on the box of a carriage, Stanislaw sat on the front of a long, narrow wagon which looked very much like a plank on four wheels, with little short pieces stuck up to form the sides. They had both come by the same road, which was like most country roads in Poland, full of deep ruts and mudholes. You never know when you are going to be thrown out of your carriage when travelling across country in this part of the world. If you *are* thrown out, you simply pick yourself up and get in the carriage again—as the Poles do, who are quite used to it. If we want to go home with Stanislaw and see his parents and his sister Wanda,



WHEN MAXIE WAS MARRIED

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

we must risk the rough road and make the best of it

STANISLAW'S HOME

Let us jump in beside Stanislaw The wagon is so narrow that two of us can only just squeeze in side by side The horses start before we are ready, but Stanislaw stops them by making an extraordinary sound something like *Tprrrr* I suppose it is Polish for "Whoa!"

Now we are off Dear me! How terribly this wagon bumps—but, of course, it has no springs On we go, hour after hour, across the wide, flat plain, with never a hedge or a hill to break its level, except far behind us we can see a long grey shadow on the skyline, where, says Stanislaw, are the mountains and forests We can understand why this land is called Poland—"the country of the Plain"

At last we are near the village We can see the church, which is a fine, large building, and much too big for such a little place Down the long, muddy street we rumble, past scattered cottages and flocks of quacking ducks or screaming geese that are being driven home to roost by the village children That is the village well over there The weighted log is so well balanced that it will tip up very easily with its full bucket at its other end

Here is Stanislaw's home, and we turn into the wide, open yard with roughly thatched farm buildings at the other side of it The house itself is solidly built of logs, and strongly jointed at the corners The wide thatch of its roof hangs far over a green

STANISLAW OF POLAND

verandah, and the little windows are brightly decorated with pretty patterns in green and red and white. Inside is the great stove, with its fat chimney-pipe leading to the roof, some quaint chairs and tables, and a spinning-wheel upon which Stanislaw's mother spins woollen yarn for weaving into cloth. On the walls are brightly coloured pictures of the Saints, and strange ornaments of curiously twisted and woven straw.

In trips fair-haired Wanda, full of welcoming smiles. On her head she wears the usual kerchief of bright orange worn by country women in that part of Poland. She wears a flowered skirt, and above it a stiff, black, sleeveless jacket richly embroidered, and sleeves of thin cotton stuff of vivid scarlet. Wanda's mother is very much like her, both in looks and in dress. Anyone can see she is Wanda's mother.

We sit down to supper. First we have beetroot soup, and with it queer little meat pies. Then fried meat, with potatoes and weird-looking mushrooms that remind us of the toadstools we avoid at home, and with stewed cucumbers and bread flavoured with caraway seeds and salt. When this is over, the *samovar*, or tea-urn, is brought in, and we drink tea without milk or sugar, and eat pretty little cakes with caraway or poppy seeds or saffron to flavour them.

STANISLAW'S FRIENDS

Stanislaw's people are very religious. We cannot help noticing that as we go about the country. At ever so many places by the wayside, we see little shrines set up, at which peasants and wayfarers

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

may pray if they choose. Even if people are travelling in a great hurry, they always find time to take off their hats or bend the knee as they pass a shrine. And when a countryman meets another, he will say in greeting, "May Jesus Christ be praised!", and his friend will answer, "For ever and ever."

Sunday is the great day of the week. Everybody puts on his best clothes, and you can tell what part he comes from by the clothes he wears. The men of the plains, in their long, full skirted, and pleated cloaks of blue or white or black or scarlet, are not nearly so picturesque as the mountaineers, who wear short coats with pockets richly embroidered in red and blue, fine white shirts with laced fronts, and tight trousers of thick white woollen stuff slit up at the ankle and finished off with a scarlet ball and blue braid.

Outside the church you may see peasants kneeling, sometimes for hours together. Inside, the church is full. Not far away stand the long wagons of country folk who have come long distances to attend church.

Stanislaw and Wanda look forward eagerly to the great festivals of Christmas, Easter, and All Souls' Day, and on St. John's Eve join with all the other young people of the village in dancing hand in hand around a huge bonfire, while the musicians play weird tunes on weirder instruments.

When their elder sister Marie was married, their uncle and his sons came down from the mountains to be at the wedding. And a fine wedding it was, too! Marie was wearing a tall crown of beautiful

STANISLAW OF POLAND

flowers, the guests their finest clothes, and all went in procession on horseback to the church

Stanislaw and Wanda are fond of listening to Uncle's tales about the bears that come down and eat the sheep, and about the wicked robber who was crushed by a big stone which he was carrying up the mountain side in order to throw it down upon other people. Hour after hour, Uncle sits by the red stove in winter, puffing away at the famous long pipe which has been in his family for over a century, while the glow from the fire lights up his fine face, now tanned and wrinkled by the suns of many summers

STANISLAW'S YEAR

Winters are terribly cold in Poland, and the vast plains are covered with snow for many weeks together. Stanislaw wears then a sleeveless coat of sheepskin with the wool turned inside and the leather of brown and crimson outside. Often when he has driven in his father's sleigh across the white plains, his father has had to stop in order to break the mask of ice and icicles hanging on the horses' muzzles, and threatening to choke them altogether.

When spring comes with winds and floods, mud and water lie everywhere, and roads are impassable. But the rains cease, the storks come back to their untidy nests on the cottage roofs, and the frogs begin their nightly chorus. The woods and forests are clad in green as if by magic, and the plain, too, takes on a green carpet, and forgets the mud, as it has long since forgotten the snow.

Summer is scorching hot. There is dust every-

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

where, and it seems as if it never has rained, and that it never will rain again. But the green of the plain changes to gold, and Stanislaw has to work hard to help in gathering the rich harvest of rye before the heavy autumn rains begin. He and Wanda sometimes visit their uncle among the mountains, and have jolly picnics and berry-picking excursions. Many a time have they seen in the forest the shy deer turning to gaze wonderingly at them, or the rough wild boar snuffling and rustling through the bushes. Once they saw a great wild bull; and their uncle told them that the Polish forests were among the few places in Europe where bulls and bisons were still found wild.

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In the long winter nights, Stanislaw and Wanda love to hear tales of the great heroes who fought and died for their beloved land, or of the triumphs of the famous musicians who went out from Poland to conquer the world by the magic of their music.

CHAPTER XIII

ANDREAS OF AUSTRIA

ANDREAS lives in the Tyrol, a beautiful land of mountain and valley, alp and forest, that forms part of the new Austria. The old Austria—the Austria of 1914—was very much larger, and formed, with Hungary, one of the largest kingdoms in Europe, but after the war Austria-Hungary was cut up into a number of separate States, of which the new Austria is one.

Andreas is proud of his name, for he is called after a famous Tyrolese patriot, who fought the great Napoleon Buonaparte and defeated his armies more than once. Andreas's brother, Joachim, too, is named after a national hero.

Like all mountaineers, Andreas and Joachim are proud of their country, and think it the finest in the world. If you ask them why, they ask you in return why so many foreigners come to see it. For the Tyrol is one of the famous tourist countries of Europe, and people from all parts of the world go to spend their holidays there. In many ways it reminds one of Switzerland, although its mountains are not nearly so high, nor is its scenery quite so grand. Still, the Tyrol is indeed beautiful, and its wonderful, pure, clear air gives new life to people

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

who go there Many a man who has lost his health in England has found it again in the Tyrol

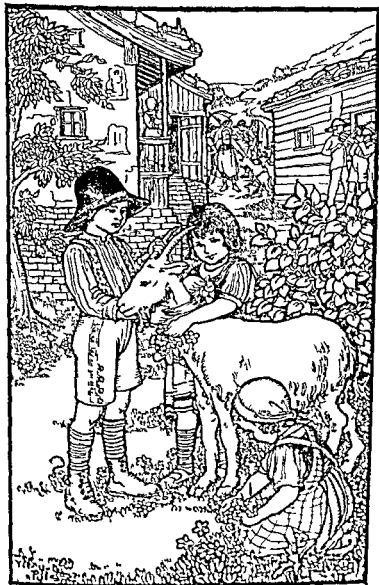
OFF TO THE TYROL

How can *we* get there? After we have crossed the Strait of Dover, we have a long train journey of nearly 600 miles, whichever way we go It takes us right across France and across Northern Switzerland Even when we arrive at *Innsbrück*, the chief town of the Tyrol, we have some distance to go before we come to the village where Andreas and Joachim live

Luckily for us, Uncle Franz and Aunt Marie-Louise have come to Innsbruck to buy some goods and sell others, so we can get a lift to the village in the long narrow cart drawn by sleepy oxen The cart has no sides, and although the oxen plod slowly along homeward, the road is so bumpy that we have to hold on tightly to prevent ourselves being jolted out

At last, from a high point in the road that winds up and up the valley, we see the village far below. The houses look like toy-houses, and the streets are so crooked and winding that the village looks as if some giant child had thrown his toy-houses down there when he had finished playing with them

Down again winds the road, through thick forests of scented pines, past green slopes on which cows and goats are feeding, until we come to the village What quaintly-pretty houses these are! The wide eaves overhang the jutting balconies that run along their fronts From the whitewashed fronts of the houses pretty windows peep out—



EVERYONE HAS A GOAT OR TWO

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

who go there Many a man who has lost his health in England has found it again in the Tyrol

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ANDREAS OF AUSTRIA

into most of the towns and villages. It will not be very long now before most Europeans dress alike.

But in Andreas's village the old dresses are still worn on high days and holidays—and there are plenty of these in the year, although everyone works hard when he is at work. On some saints' days there are wonderful religious processions, for the Tyrolese are particular in their religious duties. Inside, and often outside the houses, one sees pictures of saints, and as we go along the quiet roads we shall see many a wayside shrine with its cross and its little wooden roof.

We are tired after our journey, and are glad to rest awhile in the large room of Andreas's home. We go up to it by steps from the street. In our honour, there is not only the usual brown bread and cheese made from goat's milk, but also *knödl*—a dish loved by rich and poor in Tyrol. It consists of large balls of crumbled bread and flour, soaked in milk and eggs, and mixed with onions and bacon. It tastes delicious.

WORK AND PLAY

In the early morning, we are aroused by the tinkle-tinkle of goat bells as they come along the road on their way to the forest. Everyone here seems to have a goat or two, and every morning the goat boy collects all the goats from the various cottages and drives them off to the woods. To-night we shall see them coming home again—goats of all sorts and sizes, with their little bells tinkling as they scamper away to their homes.

Many things seem queer and quaint to us as we

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

many covered with beautiful flowers. Although the lower parts of the houses are often of stone, the upper parts are of wood that has mellowed and weathered to lovely colours as the years have passed.

Many houses have rows of big stones on their wide roofs to prevent damage from snow and winter winds. Some have the date of their erection worked in colours on their fronts, or even on the roofs, and others have mottoes or even rough paintings on their outer walls.

VILLAGE LIFE

There is some stir in the village near Andreas's home. We hear guns fired, men shouting and laughing, and girls squealing as they do when they are so pleased that they do not know what to do!

When we meet Andreas dressed in his holiday finery, he tells us it is because there has been a wedding, and there will be a great feast to night. Andreas and Joachim and their cousin Josef wear jaunty Tyrolese hats in which a cock's feather or a tuft of chamois hair is stuck. Over their white shirts are green embroidered braces, which support short breeches of embroidered leather. Below their bare knees are green footless stockings reaching nearly to their ankles.

Their girl cousins are gayer still, in white blouses, coloured kerchiefs, silver chains, black velvet stays, laced in front to form bodices, black skirts, and brightly coloured aprons of silk brocade.

It is not often nowadays that one sees peasants in their old national dress, for the coming of the railway and the tourist has brought the outside world



THE CZECHS STILL WEAR THEIR NATIONAL COSTUME


CHAPTER XIV

KAREL OF CZECHO SLOVAKIA

KAREL sat on a big yellow rock among the silver pines that grew in the forest on the hillside. From his high perch he could see over the tops of the trees below him to the rushing tawny flood of the river. On the opposite bank great rocks rose in fantastic pinnacles high above the dense forest by the water. Upon the tallest stood a castle, whose grey and yellow walls had stood there for hundreds of years.

Karel often looked across at the castle, and wondered whether the tales told about it were true. Some of them were very weird, but the village folk believed them all, and would not go anywhere near the castle rock after dark. In Karel's country are many castles like it—some in ruins, some still inhabited. All stand in high commanding positions, for the warrior nobles who built them in the Middle Ages set them up to make themselves masters of the surrounding countryside.

KAREL AND ELISKA

A call from below told Karel that his little sister Eliska was coming to find him. Soon she was standing on  beside him, her short wide red

ANDREAS OF AUSTRIA

marksman, and you will find a rifle-range in almost every village. Skittles is almost a national game, and on holidays the skittle alleys in the villages are rumbling all day long. Wrestling is a favourite sport.

In winter, when deep snow covers the slopes and ice is thick on the lakes, tobogganing is the game—or curling on the ice. Curling is not played with stones as in Britain, but with wooden disks bound with iron hoops, and weighing about half a stone each.

In wilder parts, the bear and the wolf are hunted; and on the high peaks the agile chamois tempts the hunter to risk his life in the hope of getting a trophy of chamois horns for his fireplace.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

wander around the village Those huge wicker baskets in which men carry loads on their backs, the enormous umbrellas carried by the old ladies, the great racks for drying grain, and the heavy "beetles" for crushing grapes at vintage time are all new and strange to us So are the big bowled, long stemmed pipes smoked by the men—and by the boys, too!

Andreas takes his share in the work of tending the animals, preparing the fields and gathering in the harvest and the vintage Every peasant here owns his own house and his own little farm, and everyone has the right to cut wood and graze his animals in the woods and upland pastures Maize, buckwheat, oats, and barley are grown In many woods the chestnuts are gathered for food There is plenty of fruit—apples, plums, apricots, and even figs, and on every sunny slope the trailing vines are to be seen On the upper pastures, where the cows are kept all summer, bilberries and cranberries grow wild

In many gardens bees are kept in gaily painted hives, to provide honey for the winter

The people in this valley have apparently never heard of the fine farming implements used in other parts of Europe, for they still have the same primitive ploughs and sickles that their forefathers used Some of the teams they use in ploughing seem queer to us, to day we have seen a horse and donkey yoked to one plough, and a cow and a donkey yoked to another

But it is not *all* work The villagers find time for play, too Every man prides himself on his skill as a

KAREL OF CZECHO SLOVAKIA

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Eliska lived. They raced over the grassy slope together until they came to the road below. It was deeply rutted by the heavy ox wagons that passed along it almost every day. Beside the road, a sparkling little river danced merrily along to join the big one farther down the valley.

There were not many houses in Karel's village, nor were they very close together, but separated from one another by stretches of pasture in which red and white cattle were grazing, and by little orchards of apples, pears, and plums, or by fields in which the villagers grew wheat, barley, peas, beet for sugar, and hops for beer, and flax for linen cloth.

Karel's mother was proud of her geese, and her large flock of nearly five hundred was the talk of the whole countryside. The family did very well with the geese, which not only provided eggs for sale, but feathers and goose-meat, which Karel's mother prepared in a very skilful fashion. Foxes used to be very troublesome until Karel's uncle Jaroslav gave him two fine hunting dogs, and then the foxes prepared to call on someone else when they felt they would like a fat goose for supper.

Karel's house had a wide, sloping, red roof that came rather low down, with weather boards beautifully carved and gaily painted. The windows were shuttered with green shutters, and there were two pretty dormer windows in the red roof to give light and air to the attic. A carved balcony went almost round the house. Behind the house was the ~~farm~~ ^{yard}, with sheds and barns, and stacks ~~of hay~~ ^{of corn} perched on wooden legs.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

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skirts fluttering in the breeze Like Karel, she loved the forest and the great rock that gave them such a splendid view across the rushing river

Presently a long raft of tree trunks shot round the river bend, with men on it toiling at the great sweeps to keep it in the middle of the stream The children watched it breathlessly, for not far ahead of the raft the river was broken by a low fall, and by rapids where the water boiled white among the jagged black fangs of rock The clever raftsmen guided the raft into the exact centre of the fall, the raft shot over the edge into the surge of rapids below, and, as the water leapt hissing over the logs, the raftsmen sprang on to the high benches they had built so that they could keep themselves dry Soon the raft had gone out of sight, and Karel and Eliska each drew a long breath, now that the excitement was over, and turned towards the forest path that led to the village

It was pleasant in the forest that fine afternoon The air was full of the magic scent of the pines, and the sunlight slanted in long golden shafts through the forest roof It was hard for Karel and Eliska to realise that in a few short weeks winter would be upon them, and the forest path they trod would be covered with six or seven feet of snow When that time came they would not go far from the village, and never into the dark forest, because of the wolves

THE VILLAGE

The pine forest came to an end at last, and below in the valley was the little village where Karel and

KAREL OF CZECHO SLOVAKIA

Now Uncle Jaroslav and Aunt Bozena come from another part of the countryside, where other fashions prevail. Uncle Jaroslav wears a broad-brimmed black hat, a long coat, with big buttons on the sleeves and down its front, closely set together, a gay neckerchief of silk or embroidered linen, and high boots of soft brown leather. Aunt Bozena wears a long red skirt in stiff rich folds, and a short bodice trimmed with silver lace and silver beads, with a pretty embroidered collar. Her head dress is of white linen, with large embroidered flaps that stand out stiffly over each shoulder.

The Czechs are fond of gymnastics. There are ever so many clubs or societies, called *Sokols*, which train young people in gymnastics, and give wonderful displays of athletics from time to time. The *Sokols* do more than this, they have libraries, they arrange lectures, and do a great deal to make the Czechs proud of their land and their independence. Not only in Czecho Slovakia, but everywhere else where Czechs live, the *Sokol* is to be found. Once a year, a grand display is held on the plains of Letna near Prague, the capital of Czecho-Slovakia, and at these national games you can see thousands of athletes at exercise, all moving together as one man. It is a wonderful sight. You know how splendid it looks when the whole school is in the playground doing the same exercises at the word of command. Imagine what it must be like to see trained athletes, thousands in number, at exercise together!

Karel has joined the *Sokol*. His father and uncle have been members for many years. You might like to know that *Sokol* means a falcon—the national

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

KAREL'S PEOPLE

Karel and his people are Czechs (pronounced *checks*) The Czechs are a very clever race of people, very fond of music, and passionately devoted to their country For hundreds of years they have been ruled by foreigners, but the Peace that followed the Great War gave them their dear land back again

In the big towns, the Czechs dress very much like other European town dwellers But in the country, especially in remote villages like Karel's, they still wear their national costume If we want to see them at their best, we must go to the little church up the valley one feast day, or we must go with Karel and Eliska to market at the country town which stands where Karel's little river joins the big one down the valley

In the market square we shall find an amazing blend of colours There are the market women dressed in short wide skirts of red, or pink, or mauve, or brown, or yellow, or black Red is commonest for bodices, light blue or black for skirts These colours look very well with the red stockings and black shoes which most women wear

When Karel's father pays a visit to the town, he puts on a richly ornamented cloth jacket of blue, with several wide collars, one upon another He wears pantaloons of yellow, and knee boots of very soft red leather Around his waist he fastens a richly embroidered belt A black hat with red or yellow ribbons streaming from it completes his holiday attire

KAREL OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

“*Co srdce pojí, more nerozdvojí*” But you can see what it looks like It means “What the heart unites, the sea never divides” No matter how far from home a Czech may be, he always thinks of his nation and his beloved land

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

bird Members of the *Sokol* wear falcon feathers in their caps

SUMMER AND WINTER

In summer Karel and Eliska help on their father's farm. They take their share in planting and sowing, in weeding and harrowing, and in the harvest. Yet they have time to attend the village school where they are getting on famously, and time to take long rambles in the pine forests. Lynxes and deer used to live in the forest in large numbers, but there are not many left now. A wild boar or two may still be met with, but most of these have been killed.

In winter, when the snow lies thick upon the ground, the children have much to do indoors. Eliska helps mother weave and dye coarse linen and woollen stuffs, and to make the clothes for the family as well as bed linen and table linen. Karel and his father carve wooden vessels and toys from soft pinewood. Other villagers make buttons, or gloves, or pretty glass beads in the long winter evenings, and almost every country woman is skilled at making beautiful lace and embroidery. Some villages are famous for weaving hair-nets, others for glassware, or for gloves or buttons, and so forth. No time is wasted. Winter or summer, the busy Czechs find plenty of useful work to do.

You would find the Czech language very hard to learn. Some words you would probably never be able to pronounce at all correctly. Here is a motto which the Czechs love. I write it in their language, but I can't tell you how to pronounce it.

KAREL OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA

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CHAPTER XV

PIERRE OF SWITZERLAND

PIERRE lives in a little village in a deep valley, among the highest mountains in Europe. It is a quaint little village, with narrow, crooked streets paved with rough cobble-stones, along which lumbering ox wagons bump and rattle all day long in summer. In winter the streets are noiseless, for they are deep in snow, and only smooth running sleighs can pass along.

PIERRE'S VILLAGE

Most of the houses are built of wood. All have wide, overhanging roofs, and a broad verandah. Many have their walls covered with tiny wooden "tiles," all carefully placed so as to overlap. Some have a flight of steps leading up to the first floor, for that is where the people live. The ground floor is a big stable for the cows.

In the small open square in the middle of the village is the market place, where country folk sell vegetables, cheeses, and fruit. There is a tall stone fountain with four long iron spouts, spurting four streams of crystal water from the mountains. It supplies the villagers with their drinking water,



PIERRE COMES DOWN THE MOUNTAIN-SIDE

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

and then to dazzling silver as they stand out bathed in glorious sunlight

LIFE IN PIERRE'S VALLEY

In summer, everyone works hard to get ready for the long winter. Butter and cheese have to be made, all the hay for the cows has to be stored carefully, great piles of logs have to be cut and sawn and meat has to be salted down and fruit gathered and put away.

Dotted here and there, on the slopes, near the house, are the hay chalets. They look just like little houses, but their wide overhanging roofs are heavily loaded with big stones. Pierre tells us that in winter the strong winds would whisk the roof off as easily as it does your cap, were it not for these stones. Sometimes, too, in early spring, great masses of snow come roaring and tumbling down from the high slopes, carrying with them hundreds of tons of earth and stones and rock. These avalanches, as they are called, sometimes sweep away whole villages. As we go along the valley we can see wide lanes cut through the forests on the mountain-side by the terrific passage of such avalanches.

Pierre asks us to go up to see the cows. We are soon out of breath, for it is a very steep track, and the cows are high up on the slopes. We hear the tinkle of the cow bells long before we see the cows. What fine creatures they are! There is the little chalet in which Pierre lives up here, and where they make the butter and cheeses. We hear a shout from above, and see Pierre's father

PIERRE OF SWITZERLAND

scrambling down a steep slope with an enormous bundle, like a small haystack, on his back. It is grass, newly mown, and packed tightly in a huge net so it can be carried down easily. Pierre's father has mown it standing on a slope where we would never dare to venture, every bit of hay is precious. How thin and keen the air is up here, and how beautifully clear! Far below us we can see the valley with its toy village (so it seems), and the white, narrow ribbon of the stream that runs roaring along its bottom.

SUMMER IN THE VALLEY

It is very hot and close in the valley, for it is so shut in by high mountains. We feel tired and heavy down there, and not nearly so light and energetic as we are when we are high on the mountain-side. The sun blazes down at noon, and only the brown and yellow lizards that play in scores among the hot stones seem to enjoy it.

Visitors from England come to this quiet valley in summer and stay in the quaint little inn by the market place. Pierre's uncle knows most of them, for they come to the village year after year for the "climbing." Pierre's uncle is a well known guide, and on some days you may meet him with his long rope coiled over his shoulder, his heavy nailed boots and his gleaming ice-axe of fine steel, with which he cuts steps in the ice when crossing the glaciers. Round his broad brimmed hat he carries blue goggles, to wear when he is walking across snow, for without these the strong glare of the sunlight on the white snow would almost blind him.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

you can see the girls fetching it in their wooden buckets. Near the market-place is the white church, with its curious bulbed spire, looking very much like a big green bottle-stopper.

All around rise the high mountains. There are larches and firs on the slopes, and spaces of green pasture; above all are the peaks clad in eternal snow. No matter how hot the sun is, the snows never melt up there; it is too high and too cold.

PIERRE'S HOME

At the wider end of the valley are farms scattered over the rich flat land at the foot of the mountains. Pierre's home is in one of these. There it is; you can tell it by its big roof, with carved weatherboards painted green and red. It has wide wooden stairs leading from the ground to the first floor. Below are the cowsheds, where the cows are kept in winter. On winter nights Pierre can hear them stamping and making queer noises in the dark. There are no cows there to-day, for it is summer time, and all the cows are on the high pastures. These pastures are called "alps," but the name is now given also to the great mountains on whose slopes they lie.

We shall be lucky if we see Pierre to-day, for he spends his time with his father and brothers on the "alps," tending the cows and making butter and cheese, which they will bring down to the valley. Hark! there is someone singing. It is Pierre. Look! there he comes, scrambling down that steep slope, with a tall wooden vessel strapped to his shoulders. It is full of milk. Watch how cleverly he comes down in spite of his heavy load. That

PIERRE OF SWITZERLAND

long, pointed stick he carries helps him splendidly
It is called an alpenstock

He is as brown as a berry He wears a rough woollen shirt, loose brown trousers reaching just below the knee, and very stout boots, heavily shod with nails so that he does not slip on the rocks His soft felt hat is broad-brimmed, and has a pretty tuft of feathers stuck jauntily in its corded band In his hand he carries a bunch of beautiful flowers for his sister, little Jeannette On the mountain slopes, flowers grow in great masses of wonderful blues, mauves, yellows, and reds In springtime the valley meadows are carpeted with crocuses, white and mauve, and it seems wicked to walk on them, crushing down the beautiful blooms with your feet

Pierre asks us up the stairs into his house, and brings little Jeannette to see us She is a jolly little maiden, with flaxen hair and blue eyes She wears a skirt of cotton stuff, with a sort of chessboard pattern all over it and a little sleeveless velvet bodice embroidered in coloured silks She has a wide under bodice, whose white sleeves, gathered in daintily in a wonderful pattern, look very neat She is the "baby" of the family, and stays at home helping mother while the men folk are away

Through his bedroom window Pierre can see the great white snows on the high peaks Early on summer mornings, while it is still almost dark in the deep valley, Pierre sees the snow peaks tinted with wonderful shades of pink and rose-red by the rising sun, soon they change to gold,

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

He earns good money acting as guide to climbers on the high and dangerous peaks.

WINTER

In winter everything is deep in snow. The cattle are in their stable under the house, and have to be fed every day. Sledges and sleighs are used instead of carts, and Pierre and Jeannette have fine fun with their toboggan on the snow-slopes. Their father and elder brothers go skiing; they wear great long skates of wood called skis, and carry long poles with which they guide themselves or push themselves along.

Winter nights are long, but not so dreary as you would think, for there is plenty to be done. Pierre and his brothers carve toys and ornaments out of the soft pine wood, these they sell to visitors in the summer. Jeannette is already beginning to learn lace-making, at which her mother is very clever. She makes the lace on a little pillow with many bobbins of thread which she winds and twists in and out and around little pins stuck in the pillow to help form the pattern.

Although Pierre enjoys the fun in the snow, he often wishes that winter were gone, especially when the storms howl and rage in the pitch-black nights. He longs for summer and the roar of the torrent, the beauty of the waterfalls, the bright flowers, and the tinkle of cow-bells on the slopes. Sometimes, however, there is a gathering of friends, and there is singing and dancing, which is great fun. True, the band consists only of a fiddle and a wheezy concertina, but it manages nobly.

CHAPTER XVI

RAYKO OF JUGO-SLAVIA

FROM the forested hills that rise in ridge after ridge for many miles, you go down by a narrow goat track across sloping meadows and through plum orchards to Rayko's village. Long before you get there, you can see its little pink and white houses nestling amid the trees in the bottom of the valley, through which a little river runs sparkling and bubbling over the white stones.

RAYKO'S VALLEY

The house nearest us is where Rayko lives. It has only one storey, and looks taller than it really is, because of its great high peaked wooden roof, which is as high again as the house itself. Rayko's father is very proud of it, for he and his friends built it themselves. Besides, like all houses in this country, it is built in a "lucky spot." Before it was built, Rayko's father took a good deal of trouble to see that the spot was really a lucky one. He first laid four stones on the places where the four corners of the building would rest, and left them there all night. Early in the morning he went out and carefully turned the stones over. Under the second stone he found a little beetle, and that settled it,



TO-DAY SEEMS TO BE A HOLIDAY

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

of leather covered with big silver ornaments. Men have loose linen trousers, short-sleeved jackets of blue frieze, heavily decorated with white or black braid, wonderful belts embroidered with many bright colours, and heavy with silver, and shirts of spotless linen with embroidered fronts, which show through the open jackets. Some wear light trousers of thick white woollen stuff, decked with white or silver braid.

Rayko sees us at last and breaks away from the dance to meet us. He is sturdily built. He has a pleasant face, with honest dark eyes and hair as black as the raven's wing. He asks us to come into his house.

RAYKO'S HOUSE

Militsa, Rayko's sister, runs to meet us, and together we go through the low doorway into the house. We are in a large room with a low ceiling, and an enormous oven which looks much too large for it. Along the walls are rows of earthenware jars and cooking vessels. There is a wide open chimney above the big hearth, and hung up in it are hams and slitches of bacon for the winter. There is not much furniture—just a big wooden table, a chair or two, and a number of wooden stools.

In one corner of the room is a great trap door which leads down to the cellar, where barrels of wine, potatoes, onions, and *paprika* (a sort of red pepper) are stored for use in winter. As we peep in, Rayko says, "This is for the winter. We Serbians believe that those who in summer lie to rest under the trees will have to go hungry

RAYKO OF JUGO SLAVIA

in winter " Militsa tells us a good deal about their life in the valley, and about their friends and their games, but Rayko becomes impatient at last and says mischievously, "Have you heard the Serbian proverb which runs, 'Women are here to *talk*, but men to *work*' ? " At which Militsa pulls his ear and reminds him that, after all, the Serbian girls and women work just as hard in farm and field as the boys and men

Leading from the great kitchen, which serves as both dining room and sitting room, are smaller rooms used as bedrooms We peep into one of them and see the long, narrow, high wooden bedstead heaped up and covered with cushions We shall sleep in a bed like that to night

We go outside into the garden which leads to the orchard There are stocks and sunflowers and irises, which remind us of our gardens at home, and many other flowers which are new and strange to us Beneath the orchard trees are cattle, pigs, and poultry, some of which are to be sent to market to morrow In a corner is a big open shed with a heavily thatched roof to keep out the wet Here are two of the long narrow wagons, which are pulled by the big, dangerous looking oxen, whose wicked little eyes, huge backward curving horns and long black bristles make them look very fierce But Militsa goes up to one of them and gently scratches its black india rubber-like hide—and the "fierce" beast only grunts in friendly fashion! Indeed, all the creatures—pigs, poultry goats, and cattle alike—seem extraordinarily tame, which after all

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

is not surprising, since they are practically brought up with the family

Another thing we cannot help noticing is the extreme cleanliness of everything, for we have seen many farms in our travels which are just the opposite

MARKET DAY

Next morning everyone rises with the sun, for it is market day, and there is much work to be done and a long journey to go

Holiday dress has been laid aside. Women put on spotless linen dresses with dark blue sleeveless jackets, blue sandals, and thick blue stockings, and throw coloured shawls over their coiled and braided hair. Men are dressed in long white tunics reaching to the knee, with a short sleeveless coat of blue frieze, round blue hats, and leathern belts studded with silver or embroidered in many colours. Their wide, loose, linen trousers are tucked into the tops of high boots of soft leather, or into the tops of thick blue stockings tied and cross gartered. They wear wide leather shoes or sandals.

Soon the road along the valley bottom is covered with people, wagons, oxen, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs, all going to market in the town at the lower end of the valley.

We are perched on the front of a lumbering wagon with Rayko and Militsa. As we go through the village, we pass the village churchyard with its great high wooden crosses and triangles decorated with ribbons and coloured handkerchiefs as "gifts of love" to those who have been laid to rest there.

RAYKO OF JUGO-SLAVIA

When we pass a number of little houses grouped together with their farm-buildings round a big grass yard, in the centre of which is a big lime tree, Rayko explains that this is a *zadruga*, and that the big house in it belongs to the "father" or chief of the *zadruga*. The smaller houses belong to his sons and other relatives. All live together in this little community, and obey their "father" in all things. In this way they can help one another and live in peace and prosperity. Rayko tells us that in old days nearly everybody lived in a *zadruga*, but that nowadays there are many who prefer to live in farms of their own.

At last we arrive at the town. The market-place is crowded with people and animals and live poultry. Everywhere we can see loads of goods for sale, and plenty of food to eat. By the well, the sellers of iced lemonade are doing a roaring trade, so are the cooks, who grill little skewers of meat over little charcoal fires beneath their canopies of woven beech branches. Here is a man who will cut you a slice of meat from a lamb which has been roasted whole. Here comes the hot-sausage-man with his sausages smoking hot in a deep tin tray, and the cakeman with his wooden trencher perched on a tripod.

Seated on the ground are a man and his wife, who are selling wooden instruments for carding and spinning wool. While the man makes the instruments, his wife shows how well they work. They do a good trade, for every peasant woman makes the family clothes from wool which she has herself prepared.

Others are selling wooden vessels, rough furniture

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

for house and farm, and the great carved and painted wooden chests which are to be found in almost every home

In another part of the market, lowing cattle, squealing pigs, bleating goats and sheep, and whinnying horses are being sold to eager buyers. The sun is very hot, and the air is thick with dust. We are glad to leave the market and sit beneath the shade of the tall beeches a little way out of the town. As afternoon draws on, the oxen are yoked to the big wagons, goods we have bought are bundled in, and we join the long procession home.

CHAPTER XVII

JÁNOS OF HUNGARY

FAR away in the heart of Middle Europe there is a great plain, hundreds of square miles in extent, across which wanders a wide, deep, slow river. It is a vast level prairie—so level that it looks like a calm, smooth ocean. There are places where you can stand and look to the skyline all round you, and see not the tiniest hill to break the still, vast level—not even a solitary tree. In the morning, the first red beams of the sun light up all the plain at once, and at evening his crimson farewell covers it with sunset glow.

In the middle of this great plain lives János, the plainsman, of Hungary. The great river is the Danube, which János does not often see, for it lies far away across the plain to the westward. Now and then, when he has been on a long ride with the herdsmen after cattle, he has seen the setting sun reflected in its smooth waters, but he has never sailed upon it, although he knows several men who have voyaged along it for hundreds of miles from the heart of Hungary to its mouth at the Black Sea.

JANOS AND HIS HOME

János (John) is a Magyar. He belongs to a very ancient people whose ancestors were not European.

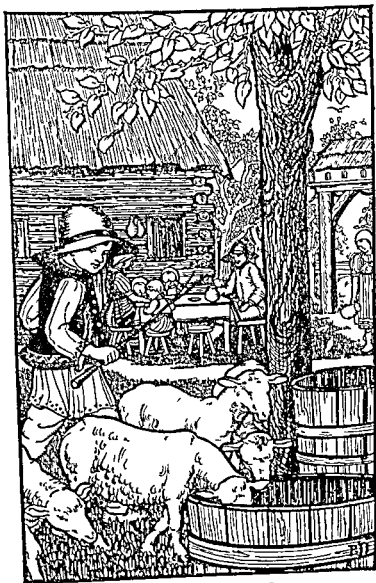
THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

at all. He loves the great plains with as great a love as the mountaineer of Switzerland loves his mountains.

His country is much smaller to-day than it was before the Great War, for like Austria, Hungary has been cut down to a small republic, which is a sorry remnant of the great wealthy country that she was in 1914. János knows all about this, but lives too far away from railways and big towns to understand exactly why it all came about.

To get to János' home, we should have to cross Dover Strait, and then go on a long train journey for some hundreds of miles across Europe until we came to Budapest, the chief city of Hungary. Here we should take a slow train, which would set us down at a little wayside station, with a few houses and farms near it. The rest of the journey would be done in a rough cart, drawn by slow oxen or by big fine horses.

The first thing we should see would be the big windmill in the far distance. When we came nearer, we should see the lonely little thatched farm-house in which János and his sister Iluska live with their mother and father and their two uncles. Close by, we should see near the well the long wooden trough for watering the cattle and sheep—a high part for the cattle, a lower part for the sheep. The well itself would interest us, for a great upright post stands by it, and slung across the post is a huge beam with a rope and bucket at one end, and a heavy weight at the other. This queer arrangement makes it easier to draw the heavy bucket of water from the well.



JÁNOS WATERS THE SHEEP

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

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THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

János' father is rich as peasant farmers go. He has a herd of the fine long-horned cattle for which the plain of Hungary is famous, many splendid horses, flocks of sheep, and a great flock of geese, which are Iluska's special charge. Near the farm are rich fields of maize and wheat, and a little orchard of plums and other fruit. There are no vines in this part of Hungary, but in other places beautiful vineyards clothe the hill slopes, and from the splendid grapes some of the finest wine in the world is made.

János wears wide linen trousers and a loose linen smock, over which is a richly embroidered sleeveless jacket, and a broad-brimmed hat to shade his eyes from the summer sun. He has a cloak, too, which he wears in colder weather; but for the fierce winters of the plains he needs his thick sheepskin coat, made so that the wool hangs in a shaggy fleece outside it to keep out the cold.

Iluska wears wide skirts over which hangs a fine coloured apron, richly embroidered in many hues near the bottom, a sleeveless vest, rich in colour and embroidery, and a spotless white blouse with wide sleeves.

Both János and Iluska wear high boots of supple leather, for, like true Magyars, they never walk when they can ride. Often they are on horseback all day long.

ON THE GREAT PLAINS

When the beauty of the spring is upon the plains, and the wild marigolds spread their golden carpets abroad, János fancies he sees in the distance a great

JANOS OF HUNGARY

lake of beautiful clear water But it is only the *mirage*, which is as common on the plains of Hungary as it is in the desert He sees it again in the heat of summer, when the drought has withered the plain and the parched fields lie thirsting for water, and the herdsmen long for a cooling drink There it is—a lovely lake of clear water at the edge of the plain, which disappears when the traveller hastens forward to reach it

Autumn brings the golden harvest of maize and wheat The blue meadow saffron spangles the dried up pastures, and the yellow leaves from the few poplars and acacias that grow near the scattered farms are blown over the plain At early morning and at evening dense mists arise, and herdsmen find it unsafe to wander far

Winter spreads his snowy robe over the silent plains The shepherds and herdsmen have gathered their animals into safe shelter for the cold season, and clad in their sheepskin coats, sit by their little cabins talking, or playing on the *tilinko* (flute), or carving at the handles of the crooked sticks which they carry But of all times in the year János loves the harvest time best This is the time when men are merriest and hearts are lightest—because, though work is at its hardest, it is pleasant to know that Mother Earth has once again provided a rich measure of food for man and beast When the last of the corn is carted, the reapers join in procession, carrying before them a great flower decked sheaf

This is the time, too, when wandering gipsies come to the farmstead and amuse the reapers and the sheaf binders with dancing and song

CHAPTER XVIII

BATISTE OF SPAIN

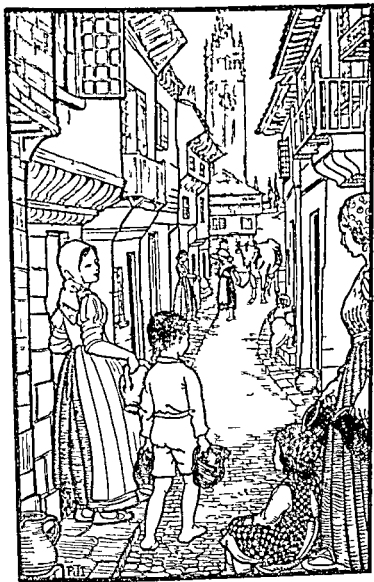
BATISTE, and Pepita his sister, live in Sunny Spain, where skies are blue and there is little rain all the year round

You may think it very delightful to live in a land where the sun is nearly always shining, and so it is in many ways—if you are rich and can have a fine white house and many servants to wait upon you. But Batiste and Pepita are poor, and have to work hard for a living on the little farm which has belonged to the family for hundreds of years. And it is hard to keep at work beneath a blazing sun, which is so hot at midday that the country folk called the noontide hours the “hours of fire.” All those who can afford it take a long nap at noontide—they call it the *siesta*. But there is no *siesta* for Batiste and Pepita, for there is always something to be done on the farm.

BATISTE'S HOMELAND

Come with me to Sunny Spain and take a peep at the little farm where Batiste lives

It stands on a wide flat plain of rich red earth, across which the long lines of canals, clear as crystal, carry the precious water to the hundreds of little



FEFITA GOES TO TOWN WITH THE MILK

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

fields For this is a thirsty land, and only a little rain falls during winter, while in summer there is none Day after day the burning sun beats down from cloudless skies, drying up everything and turning the roads into tracks of deep red dust If it were not for the life-giving canals, from which countless little channels carry the beautiful water to the fields, all would wither and die

In the hot summer-time, the gates which are opened to let water run to the fields are closed for days together. For the water is sternly guarded by officers whose duty it is to look after the canals Woe betide any farmer who raises the gates at the wrong time! He is not only severely punished by the judge, but he is lucky if he does not get a broken head from angry farmers whom he has cheated of precious water.

No wonder the plain is called a *huerta* or "garden" It stretches before us as far as we can see, rich with fruit trees and mulberry trees in shining rows, with wide plantations of waving cane, and great square beds of garden vegetables that look from a distance like enormous green handkerchiefs spread on the red earth

Here and there are the little farm houses with enclosures for horses and cattle and pigs In the near-by canal, flocks of ducks sail grandly like fleets of ivory white galleons, and in the sunlight clouds of pigeons wheel above the stacks

BATISTE'S HOUSE

Batiste and Pepita live with their mother and father in a farm-house which is little more than

BATISTE OF SPAIN

a large hut. Indeed in Spanish it is called a *barraca*—a “cabin”

Its walls are *adobe*—built of clay. Its roof is neatly thatched with straw, with a cross set up at each end for luck. In the *adobe* walls four little square windows, with frames painted bright blue, and a neat little door of the same pretty colour, look cheerily out from the white front of the house, which Batiste and his father have carefully whitewashed to keep out the heat of the sun.

In front of the *barraca* is a little bed of brightly coloured flowers. Behind it is an arbour of vines which hang heavy with ripe grapes in autumn; and beneath the arbour is a little seat where Pepita and her mother can sit with their sewing—for they make with their own hands all the clothing for the family. Then there are the *corrals* or farm buildings for the cow and the pigs, and for Roseta, the donkey, which takes the farm produce to market. Here, too, are the hens and the turkeys, and here the white ducks come waddling home at evening after a long day's hunting and playing on the canal.

Inside the *barraca* are a living-room with rough wooden furniture, and a wide shelf displaying a gallant row of glazed green pitchers and water jars, a room for mother and father to sleep in, and a tiny one each for Pepita and Batiste.

THE DAY'S WORK

Work begins for Pepita and Batiste at dawn. The beasts are fed, and while Batiste goes off with his big steel hoe to the melon patch, where swelling green globes are showing among the leaves, his father

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

loads the clumsy cart with vegetables and, crying "Arre! Aca!" to Roseta the donkey, sets off to the big city five miles away

Pepita's job is to "go round with the milk" But she does not do it as milkmen and farmers do in England She takes the cow with her! The cow knows just as well as Pepita what is to be done As soon as Pepita calls her, she comes solemnly out of the *corral* and with Pepita behind her she trudges steadily down the path that leads to the main road to the city

Already the road is thronged with market-carts on their way to town, herds of goats go bleating along, a ragged urchin or two behind them, and sturdy girls in threes or fours, arms linked together, step out briskly in order to be in time at the silk-factory For on the *buerta*, silkworms are reared on the leaves of the mulberry trees, and the rich yellow knots of silk are taken by the farmers to the factory to be spun into silks of beautiful colours All the girls wear bright silk handkerchiefs on their heads, on Sundays they wear *mantillas* of black silk which look very fine The boys and men wear broad *sombreros* of straw to shield their heads from the sun, with a close fitting scarf of scarlet or blue beneath to keep the sweat from running into their eyes

But what of Pepita and the cow? Already she can see the wonderful towers of the cathedral high above the red roofed houses and white, green shuttered walls of the town The great bells toll for the morning service, and the city is wide awake although the first long rays of the

BATISTE OF SPAIN

morning sun have only just begun to turn the red earth of the fields into living gold.

Through the narrow streets go Pepita and the cow, Pepita crying "Milk! Milk!" The cow knows where each customer lives, and waits patiently at the door while Pepita milks her and fills the pitcher brought out for the purpose.

Pepita stops to crack a joke with the women and girls who are at work doing the washing in a clear pool by the roadside, they beat the clothes smartly against the smooth stones instead of using soap. When all the customers are served, Pepita drives the cow back home again, but not before she has paid a visit to the market place where vegetables, fruit, long strings of black sausages, clusters of chillies, giant red hams, long boat-shaped rolls, mighty cheeses, raisin cakes, and a host of other delicacies are sold. Great jars of wine, and pitchers, and tins of pickled olives have corners all to themselves.

HARVEST TIME

When the autumn comes, everyone rejoices, for then the pear trees bend low with their yellow load, the apricots peep rosily from their green leaves on the sunny walls, and the vineyards are heavy with luscious black grapes. Amid the sea of golden wheat, the gleaming sickles of the reapers are at work, and already great piles of wheat are gathered on the thrashing floors. Everywhere the creaking carts carry heavy burdens.

The olives from the olive-yards are taken to the press which makes oil for them all in the

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

village ; and the grain, too, is carted to the mill where everyone has his corn ground. No money passes ; the farmers pay so much olive oil or so much flour for the privilege of having their olives crushed or their wheat ground.

Vineyards are stripped in turn of their purple grapes. Everyone helps to bring the vintage in. The grapes are put into tall earthenware jars with a little honey and lime ; and then, after about twenty days, the wine is drawn off and stored in barrels and sealed jars in the store cellar.

When most of the work is done, many of the farm workers go off to the city to spend their money in feasting and drinking, or in witnessing the bull-fights that are so popular there. In some of the big cities, thousands of people go to the bull-ring on holidays, just as thousands of English people go to see football matches.

CHAPTER XIX

FELIPE OF PORTUGAL

FELIPE lives in the sunny south west of Europe, where vineyards clothe the hill-sides, and oranges, lemons, citrons, and other delicious fruit grow in the open air. He is proud of his country, although it is not nearly so large as its neighbour Spain, for little Portugal has played an important part in the world's history. Was it not a Portuguese—Vasco da Gama—who braved the dangers of the "*Cape of Storms and Torments*," and found the sea road to India? And was it not a Portuguese—Ferdinand Magellan—who was the first man to sail round the world? All through the years of the Great Age of World Discovery, Portuguese mariners ventured overseas to distant lands, pointing the way for others, who often reaped the rich rewards of Portuguese courage and enterprise.

OFF TO PORTUGAL

Felipe has invited us to pay him a visit. It is not a great journey to Portugal in these days. Besides, we are lucky enough to be able to go direct from London in a steamer which belongs to Felipe's grandfather, and which trades regularly between

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

London and Lisbon, the great port and capital of Portugal

We steam down the English Channel in the teeth of a fresh south westerly wind, which makes us wish that we were a little more used to sea voyages. Fortunately for us, the wind dies down as we pass Ushant, the cape at the end of the French peninsula of Brittany, and we make our trip across the dreaded Bay of Biscay in quite calm weather. However, we are quite ready to believe all the tales we have heard about the fierce storms and heavy seas of "the Bay" without proving them to be true by our own experience!

Our steamer is not a "crack" liner, so we are over four days getting to Lisbon. As we steam slowly up the broad mouth of the Tagus against its strong flood, we cannot help thinking of the wonderful history of this part of the world. Where we now plough our way up stream, Phœnician galleys, Roman triremes, Moorish galleys, the fleets of the Crusaders, and the brave little ships of the Great Discoverers have sailed. On either hand the shores rise to green hills and mountains, on whose slopes we can see the white walls of beautiful villas, pretty villages, and seaside resorts beloved of the people of Lisbon. Lisbon itself looks very wonderful across the blue Tagus with its stately buildings rising high upon its seven hills, but we are more interested at the moment in the graceful native boats or *feluccas*, with their gaily painted hulls and their great widespread lateen sails as they glide swiftly down-stream with wind and tide behind them.



FELITE IS CUTTING CORN

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

IN FELIPE'S HOME-LAND

Felipe has come many miles by train to meet us at the harbour-side. He is dressed very much as an English boy would be, except that he wears a very broad-brimmed hat to shelter his eyes from the brilliant sunlight. He at once takes us off to a little restaurant near the harbour, where we have the choice of many dishes—many of them flavoured with garlic. Felipe chooses *canja*, which is chicken broth and rice; and advises us to try *cosido*, which we discover to be boiled chicken, bacon, and sausage with rice. Rice seems to be quite an important part of Portuguese meals—at any rate in Lisbon.

Afterwards we wander down to the fish-market, where fish-wives in striped or chequered aprons, and wide-brimmed shovel-hats, with a kind of thick veil covering the back of the neck, stand by their little umbrella-shaded stalls. We have not much time to see the city itself. Some day we must come to visit its beautiful buildings and gardens. But now we must hurry off to catch our train.

How dry the country seems when we have left behind the green gardens and woods! Yet the yellow grasses seem to suit the fine herds of long-horned cattle. As we mount the slopes, forests of evergreen oaks and plantations of olive-trees are to be seen. Presently we are in the forest country, where the great oaks grow which yield cork. Beneath the trees we see big droves of pigs and herds of black goats.

Here we are at a little wayside station, where

FELIPE OF PORTUGAL

a few wondering peasants, with kerchiefs tied about their hats to protect them from the sun, stand to watch the train go by. They are tanned by the sun to a colour something like that of old mahogany, they live in the open air, and sleep "under the stars" more often than not, whether it be summer or winter. Their food is simple—bread and olive oil, beans and fruit, and perhaps a piece of pork once or twice in the week, for there are pigs without number here.

A CORK FOREST

The mule-cart is waiting for us. It is a long, narrow, wooden vehicle open at back and front, with high sides and no seats. We sit on the floor, and soon discover that it has no springs either! Yet we are provided with mattresses stuffed with maize leaves—to break the shocks of the bumping along the stony road.

The mules are driven by means of a single rein, skilfully handled by our barefooted driver. We have not gone far before we turn into the cork oak forest, whose rough, sturdy trunks rise from beds of yellow grasses and pretty wild flowers. We think of wolves! And as if in answer to our thoughts, Felipe tells us many stories of attacks made by wolves on passing travellers. We are not much comforted by them!

The ring of axes and the deep voices of men among the trees make us look at where cork gatherers are at work among the trees on one side of the road. They are cutting deep lines in the bark, and pulling away large sheets of cork, leaving bright yellow

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

patches of naked wood where the bark has been torn away.

By and by the bark will grow again, only to be cut away once more. Beneath the trees are high stacks of cork, which will be sent away by mule-cart to the factories. Think of the things for which cork is used—from the ordinary bottle-stopper to cork lifebelts; from cork-dust for packing fresh grapes in to the linoleum we use on our floors. No wonder the cork-workers take such care of their trees.

AMONG THE VINES

Beyond the forest, we go down again into a pleasant valley, which widens as we descend into a narrow plain, where maize, wheat, and fruit are growing, and whose edges are lined with olive groves and vineyards.

Farther down the vine is everywhere. It trails along the hedgerows, and even on the ground. It climbs along wooden supports, it wreathes its tendrils around the trees, it clambers over the porches of the cottages. In the grape-harvest you may see bands of villagers with tall baskets piled high with purple grapes strapped on their backs, carrying them to the wine-press. When the grapes are all gathered and the vintage over, there will be feasting and dancing and song.

If we could peep into the low-raftered room where the grapes are being robbed of their rich juice to make the splendid wine for which Portugal is famous, we should see sturdy peasants, bare to the thighs, treading out the juice to the sound of

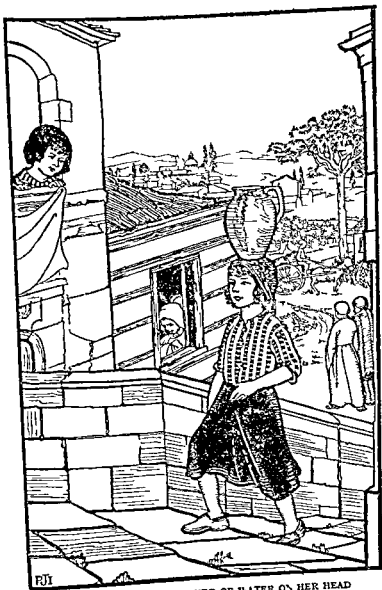
CHAPTER XX

MARCO OF ITALY

AMONG the mountains of sunny Italy lies a little village whose narrow crooked streets are so steep that stone steps are made in the roadway for people to climb up to the houses at the top. When we first see the village from the winding road along the valley, its red roofs seem to be climbing the mountain slopes, and we wonder how the people ever get up to their houses, until we see the wonderful flights of crooked steps like stone ladders. The village seems like those queer villages we dream of sometimes, for not only are the houses built on steep slopes up which ordinary people find it hard to climb, but the houses overhang, and jutting balconies almost touch each other across the street.

MARCO AND MARGHERITA

This is a part of Italy rarely visited by tourists, who usually keep to the splendid cities for which the country is world famous. So when we get off our mules, which have carried us patiently over stony ways for many long hours, we are at once surrounded by a friendly and curious crowd of women and children.



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SHE CAN BALANCE A FITCHER OF WATER ON HER HEAD

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

Not a man is to be seen ! The women and children seem to be doing all the work. But this is only because many of the men-folk are up among the mountains looking after their little flocks of sheep and goats. There many of them will stay until summer is nearly over, when they will drive their flocks down again into the valley. But here is our little friend Margherita, who comes tripping forward, leading her big brother Marco by the hand, for he seems shy ! Both are as brown as berries. Margherita wears a wonderful tight-fitting bodice of green and red, a dark short skirt, and shoes of tough, soft leather. Only on feast-days does she wear gay stockings and her white head-dress with its long ribbons. Marco looks rough and untidy in his loose knickerbockers and rough brown coat ; but he smiles merrily and takes off his broad-brimmed hat with a graceful bow that marks him out as a little gentleman.

As we climb the "stone ladder" which leads to the house, we are astonished to see how easily the women carry up enormous loads on their heads. Here is one carrying a huge bundle of linen which she has made ; there is another with a barrel of wine, and another with a great faggot of sticks on her head and a baby in her arms ! Yet we ache in every limb before we arrive at Marco's porch, tired and out of breath.

LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

When we have rested, and eaten our meal of roast fowl, bread, olives, and wine, we go out on the little balcony and look around us.

MARCO OF ITALY

Below is the winding road by the swift running stream, and the red roofs of the little houses, with their white or pink walls and green shutters. Almost every house has its little garden and its pigs and hens, and farther away are bright green and yellow patches where vegetables, wheat, and maize grow on the thin soil.

Across the valley, we can see the vineyards and olive yards of the lower slopes, above them the brown, scorched pastures leading to groves of beech and chestnut where the children gather sticks for the fire very early in the morning, or sweet chestnuts in the autumn. High above the woods are greener pastures. Somewhere up there are Marco's father and elder brothers watching the goats and sheep. And over the green high pastures we can see the dazzling white of the snow on the mountain that keeps watch over the valley and its little village. The bright sunlight, the wonderful blue of the sky, and the marvellous shades of green and brown along the valley make a picture which we shall find it hard to match anywhere else in the world.

In the village there is always work to be done. Water must be fetched in the great pitchers from the sparkling fountain in the little market-place. Margherita can balance a pitcher of water on her head, and carry it home up the "stone ladder" without spilling a drop. Every woman of the village can. There is bread to be baked, wine to be made, and there are cheeses and hams to be prepared for winter.

Winter is long and severe. All the summer, boys and girls are up early in the morning and away to

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

Not a man is to be seen! The women and children seem to be doing all the work. But this is only because many of the men-folk are up among the mountains looking after their little flocks of sheep and goats. There many of them will stay until summer is nearly over, when they will drive their flocks down again into the valley. But here is our little friend Margherita, who comes tripping forward, leading her big brother Marco by the hand, for he seems shy! Both are as brown as berries. Margherita wears a wonderful tight-fitting bodice of green and red, a dark short skirt, and shoes of tough, soft leather. Only on feast-days does she wear gay stockings and her white head-dress with its long ribbons. Marco looks rough and untidy in his loose knickerbockers and rough brown coat; but he smiles merrily and takes off his broad-brimmed hat with a graceful bow that marks him out as a little gentleman.

As we climb the "stone ladder" which leads to the house, we are astonished to see how easily the women carry up enormous loads on their heads. Here is one carrying a huge bundle of linen which she has made; there is another with a barrel of wine, and another with a great faggot of sticks on her head and a baby in her arms! Yet we ache in every limb before we arrive at Marco's porch, tired and out of breath.

LIFE IN THE VILLAGE

When we have rested, and eaten our meal of roast fowl, bread, olives, and wine, we go out on the little balcony and look around us.

MARCO OF ITALY

Below is the winding road by the swift-running stream, and the red roofs of the little houses, with their white or pink walls and green shutters. Almost every house has its little garden and its pigs and hens, and farther away are bright green and yellow patches where vegetables, wheat, and maize grow on the thin soil.

Across the valley, we can see the vineyards and olive-yards of the lower slopes, above them the brown, scorched pastures leading to groves of beech and chestnut where the children gather sticks for the fire very early in the morning, or sweet chestnuts in the autumn. High above the woods are greener pastures. Somewhere up there are Marco's father and elder brothers watching the goats and sheep. And over the green high pastures we can see the dazzling white of the snow on the mountain that keeps watch over the valley and its little village. The bright sunlight, the wonderful blue of the sky, and the marvellous shades of green and brown along the valley make a picture which we shall find it hard to match anywhere else in the world.

In the village there is always work to be done. Water must be fetched in the great pitchers from the sparkling fountain in the little market place. Margherita can balance a pitcher of water on her head and come up home on the "iron ladder."

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the woods to gather huge bundles of firewood, which is carefully stored for use in the cold weather. But this is over by seven o'clock—breakfast time, and there are many other tasks to be done. Yet Mirco and Margherita are happy, you can hear them singing merrily as they go about their work. Sometimes in the warm evenings they go down to the little house of the cobbler, whose wife is a learned woman and can teach people to read and write. They cannot go to school, for the nearest is many miles away in the next village.

BUSY PEOPLE

What wonderful people the villagers are! Everything they eat and drink and wear they make or prepare for themselves. From the maize they make a stiff porridge called *polenta* which is the chief food of most of the poorer people when they can get it. We taste it, but do not like it very much. It is something like a slab of stiff cold porridge-pudding. When the chestnuts are gathered, they are carefully dried over a small fire, and then taken to the little mill in the valley where they are ground into fine chestnut flour, from which tasty little cakes can be made.

From the sheep, fine wool is got, and during the winter everyone helps in spinning and weaving and dyeing it. From the cloth, Margherita and her mother make clothes and blankets for the whole family. On warm summer evenings the porches and "stone ladders" are filled with groups of women and girls knitting or making beautiful lace, chatting merrily the while.

MARCO OF ITALY

When the grapes are gathered in the little vineyards and the wine-presses run with the sweet juice, there is great fun for everybody. And all through the year stores of great wine-jars and wine-barrels provide daily drink for busy workers. As for the olives, they are gathered and crushed in the mill to yield up their rich yellow oil, which is so important in every peasant's meal.

CHAPTER XXI

D'MITRI OF GREECE

HIS real name is Demetrius, but nobody ever bothers to call him that—he is just D'mitri. When you first see him you think he is a little girl, for he wears a very full, pleated, white skirt reaching almost to the knee, and scarlet shoes of soft leather, with turn up toes and a big fluffy “pom pom” on each. His white loose shirt, with its baggy sleeves, looks very much like a girl's blouse, and over it he wears an embroidered sleeveless jacket of velvet much like the “zouave” jacket some girls wear in England when such things happen to be fashionable. Around his neck hangs a long necklace of fine large beads, with which he always seems to be playing. Surely it is a girl and not a boy after all!

But look at his uncle who stands by him, and who is dressed very much in the same way—even to the long string of beads! There can be no mistake about uncle, for he wears a fine long black moustache, and has a deep bass voice that rumbles like distant thunder. So D'mitri is D'mitri—and not his sister Andromache.

D'MITRI'S COUNTRY

D'mitri's country is the wonderful land of Greece, where the snow-capped mountains rise into the



SURELY IT IS A GIRL AND NOT A BOY!

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

cloudless blue of the sky, and where the deep blue sea runs far into the land between white and yellow cliffs in thousands of bays and gulfs. Off the coast lie hundreds of beautiful islands, like emeralds set in a mirror of sapphire.

Yet, beautiful as it is, it is a poor country for those who have to earn their bread and olives by hard work in their little fields. There are not many large plains, for much of Greece is filled with mountains whose nearly barren slopes go up steeply to the snows that gleam against the blue.

From very early days the Greeks who found that they could not get a living from the land turned to the sea for their support. They became clever fishermen and skilful sailors. They built good ships and made trading voyages which brought them wealth. And even to day, much of the trade of the eastern Mediterranean is in the hands of the Greeks, whose forefathers learned sea trading long before Julius Cæsar and his Roman legions set foot on the shores of Ancient Britain. Go where you will among the thriving ports of the Levant (eastern Mediterranean) and you will find the Greek flag of blue and white stripes flying at the masthead of craft of all sorts and sizes—from small sailing vessels to big powerful steamers.

D'MITRI'S HOME

We first see D'mitri on the quay of a port famous for its currants, for D'mitri's uncle, Alexander, has charge of one of the great warehouses in which the boxes of currants are stored until they can be put on board the big steamers that carry them to London.

D'MITRI OF GREECE

But D'mitri does not live there, he is only paying a visit. That is why he is wearing his holiday dress—and, if the truth *must* be told—why he is so very smart and *clean*.

D'mitri lives in a tiny stone house which stands in its little grove of olive trees at the top of a long valley, just below the white bald head of a mountain which, as yet, the boy has never dared to climb. It is rather a miserable little house. Its windows are small and have no glass in them. It has only two rooms, and very little furniture. D'mitri, Andromache, and her father and mother sleep on the floor, which is not very clean. Yet mother is always hard at work, but she is nearly always in the fields or in the orange- or olive groves. In spite of this she manages to do the cooking, and when nights are cold and rough storm winds howl outside she works hard at making the clothes for the family—the white kilts or *justanellas* for D'mitri and his father, and the cleverly embroidered vests for herself and little Andromache. But these gay things are carefully put away, with the jaunty tasselled caps of scarlet which every Greek wears on holidays, until feast days come round—which happens rather often.

Although D'mitri's people are poor farmers and live rather miserably in their little stone house, we must not think that all Greeks live like that. Many live in towns in comfortable houses, which would remind one of French houses were it not that their roofs are flat. In Greece, summers are long and dry and hot, and people love to spend the cool evenings on the roof, and even to sleep there through the short, warm summer nights.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

D'mitri loves to visit Uncle Alexander, for then he can sit with him sipping thick, black coffee at one of the little iron tables of a *cafe*, and listen to a band or to some sort of entertainment, or he can watch the endless stream of people going past, and the traders, fruit sellers, carts, and motor-cars in the stone paved streets

D'MITRI'S WORK

D'mitri is a hard worker. When he grows up to be a man he will find time for many things—for gossip which every Greek dearly loves—because his women folk will do much of the hard work for him !

At present he is up early every morning tending the small flock of goats and sheep belonging to his father. Very few people in D'mitri's valley have cows, the pasture is too poor, and only sheep and goats can live on most of it. However, goats give good, rich milk, so people are not so badly off after all.

When the olives are ripe, all the family go out to gather them, for they are very precious. Some are pickled in salt, but the ripest are sent to the little olive mill in the valley, where they are crushed between heavy rollers until a stream of thick rich oil gushes out. This oil is butter to the poorer Greeks, they eat it with bread just as we eat butter. Down where the valley widens and looks toward the south, is a vineyard of currants where there is always plenty of work at vintage time. Currants, of course, are really tiny black grapes which grow on vines trained on stout short poles, much as vines are in

D'MITRI OF GREECE

France When the little grapes are ripe, busy workers gather them in wicker baskets and carry them to the trays on which the grapes are spread in the sun to dry and become currants. The currants are then packed in boxes for export. The grape growers make wine, too. The grapes are taken to a great vat or tub which is set up in the vineyard. Above the tub is a rough wooden receptacle with a bottom made of stout twigs and branches. Into it the baskets of grapes are emptied, and a lusty Greek jumps into it with bare feet, dancing up and down and crushing the ripe grapes so that the rich juice runs through the openings below into the great vat. He soon becomes stained from head to foot with the purple red of the grapes, but he does not mind, for he is helping to make the wine which every Greek loves.

Harvest for the Greek means a gathering of grapes and olives and oranges as well as the reaping of grain. It is the time of plenty, too, when bread and olives have added to them a mess of mutton stew, or a roasted sheep garnished with savoury herbs. It is a time also of rejoicing—of dances and songs and music.

THE ANCIENT GREEKS

On the hillside, not far from D mitri's home are the ruins of a great theatre. D mitri has often been there, and as he has gazed at the great marble seats which fill the great circle in the ground he has often thought what wonderful people his ancestors must have been. On his way to visit Uncle Alexander, he passes the ruins of a beautiful marble

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

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temple, some of whose beautiful columns are still standing, and he loves to think what it must have looked like in the days of its glory. He wonders, too, why his people do not build such glorious things to-day.

The ancient Greeks in their beautiful country learned how to build the most beautiful buildings, how to carve in stone the most beautiful statues the world has ever seen, and how to write the most beautiful things the world has ever read or heard.

CHAPTER XXII

IVANKO OF BULGARIA

IVANKO lives in a garden of roses ! Perhaps it is the biggest rose garden in the world, for it is more than eighty miles long, and I know not how many miles wide !

In other parts of Ivanko's country the peasants grow wheat and maize and fruit and vegetables, or they rear cattle and sheep and goats. But in this particular region of Bulgaria you may let your eye rove over the whole countryside and see nothing but roses everywhere.

You would think, perhaps, that Ivanko's land is a peaceful and a happy one. But few countries have had so many wars, and few have had such a troubled history. Bulgaria, Ivanko's country, has been long torn by quarrels with her neighbours—often because of the greed or cruelty of her own rulers. Yet, to those who live in Ivanko's village among the roses, war and quarrels must seem far away.

A VISIT TO IVANKO

Suppose some genie could whisk us up and carry us away to the south east of Europe where the wild Balkans raise their barren heads to the snows. Look south over the broad flat plain

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

whose delicate yellows and greens lie thinly veiled in glimmering mist. Somewhere on this plain, and not many miles from the foot of the mountains, lies the village in which Ivanko lives.

If it is the month of May or June, comes borne on the gentle wind from the south the delicate scent of millions of roses. For nearly two hundred villages of the plain devote all their work to rose growing. From the roses, the Bulgarian villagers distil the famous perfume known as "attar of roses." So rare is it that you must use a million roses to make less than a pound of it. No wonder it is costly—though the peasants who make it get only a very small part of the price paid for it to the merchants who sell it.

Let us go down to Ivanko's village, which nestles among its rose plantations beneath the shelter of a thick wood that keeps off the bitter winds from the north. Here it is, with its flat-fronted white-washed houses and its low, red, overhanging roofs. A little stream gushes over its cool stones, feeds the stone basin in the little square market-place, and bubbles on. By the stone basin sits Ivanko, playing with his dog. He wears loose baggy trousers girt in at the waist by a wide scarlet sash wound round many times. Above it is a loose tunic open at the neck. On his head he wears a tall black sheepskin cap.

He rises to greet us, and takes us to his house among the roses. We are surprised to find that the roses grow in great, thick, high parallel hedges, six or seven feet high; and not in isolated bushes or clumps as with us. Ivanko tell us how his



THE TIME OF ROSES

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

father made the rose plantation by burying, in long ditches or trenches, whole branches from old rose trees, and how by and by the young shoots sprang up and made a beautiful hedgerow of roses.

GATHERING ROSES

Ivanko takes us to a corner of the plantation where merry girls are at work plucking roses and buds and placing them in the big baskets they carry. Each girl has two, one slung at each end of a long pole which is carried over the shoulder. Look at the beautiful embroidery on the girls' dresses and on the ends of their wide linen sleeves and at the hems of their aprons.

As the baskets are filled they are taken, piled high in creaking ox-wagons, to the village distillery, where the roses are put into a great copper vessel that reminds you of those used by magicians and alchemists of old. Under it is a brick furnace. From the top of it runs a tube into a flask that catches the precious rosewater. Merchants from the big towns far away come to Ivanko's village to buy the perfume, which they sell at a huge profit. The peasants cannot sell the attar themselves, except to the merchants; so they must needs accept what the merchants will give for it.

When rose-time is over, Ivanko loves to spend his whole day in the market-square when it is market-day. Crowds of people come in their lumbering ox-wagons from surrounding villages; wandering musicians and pedlars, conjurers and dancers, find their way there from no one knows where, and the wine-sellers put out their big yellow

IVANKO OF BULGARIA

and red jars ready for the thirst which dancing will create in all the buyers and sellers in the market

By the wayside are piles of melons—the cheapest vegetable in the village Butter and cheeses, strings of onions and queer dried vegetables, and other country produce are on sale Donkeys come in loaded high with live cocks and hens tied together in a big bundle with string¹ Sturdy ponies waddle along, almost altogether buried beneath enormous loads of firewood

Buyers and sellers squat by the wayside, arguing furiously and bargaining craftily, consuming cup after cup of thick, sweet coffee or bowl after bowl of sour red wine, smoking endless cigarettes the while Others, like Ivanko, wander to and fro among the piles of merchandise, and the lowing cattle brought in for sale, or crowd into corners of the marketplace where jugglers amuse the rustics

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CHAPTER XXIII

TOMÁ OF ROUMANIA

TOMÁ was born in a little village that nestles in a warm valley at the foot of the Carpathians—that great mountain range which you can see curving like a horse-shoe in the middle of the map of Europe. On both sides, steep, green meadows run up to the thick forests that clothe the mountain slopes where the sly red fox, the grey wolf, and the big brown bear make their homes. Higher still is the bare rock of the peaks, sometimes covered with snow, which the rising sun turns a delicate rose-colour that deepens to red and gold, and suddenly flashes into bright silver.

In winter the snow lies thick upon peak and forest, mountain and meadow, and Tomá has great fun. But he is glad when the snow melts in the valley and begins to retreat to its strongholds on the mountain tops. For then crowds of white and blue crocuses carpet the meadows; and hyacinths, cowslips, and violets star the shady places with bright colours, and many brilliant flowers deck the fields.

WHEN TOMÁ WAS A BABY

When Tomá was born there was great joy in the house, for he was a boy, and therefore much more



A BROOM TO KEEP WICKED FAIRIES OFF

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

important than his sister Ileana. To keep away evil spirits, a tiny spot of white ashes from the fire on the hearth was daubed on his forehead. Whenever he was bathed, his mother was always very careful where she threw the bath-water afterwards. She never threw it beyond the shade cast by the house for fear of throwing it over the fairies, who might get angry and bring bad luck.

If Tomá had to be left, a broom was always leant against his wooden cradle to keep wicked fairies off; for they might perhaps take him away and leave a very ugly baby in his place!

Tomá was much longer learning to walk than Ileana had been; so one day his mother tied his tiny feet together with a red thread, put his feet on the doorstep, and solemnly cut the thread there to take away his fear of walking. Whether this did any good or not I cannot say; but it is true enough that Tomá learned to walk shortly afterwards.

Tomá had a grand christening, although I do not suppose he liked it very much. The priest plunged him headlong into a vessel full of very cold water, and when he was lifted out red and screaming with cold, he was covered with holy oil, which was not washed off until the next day.

Children seem to grow up quickly in Tomá's valley. He was scarcely ten years old when he took his turn at leading the big oxen at the plough, with his long hide whip in his hand. As for Ileana, she was busy making woollen yarn at nine years of age—walking along like a little woman, with her rough distaff thrust in her embroidered girdle, and

TOMA OF ROUMANIA

her busy fingers twirling the wool and winding it on the bobbin.

TOMA'S HOME

Let us take a peep at Tomá's home in that beautiful valley among the mountains. It is one of those pretty white cottages that we see peeping through the trees. It looks very fresh and clean, for it has been made ready for Easter, when everybody has new clothes, and when all people's houses have what we call a "spring cleaning."

Here we are at Tomá's home. Tomá's father is very proud of it, for he and his two brothers built it from the forest wood and the clay many years ago. They made the roof first. They put thick thatch over its timbers and bound it down with strong branches and twigs. Then they set up the four big corner posts, and held them fast by fixing heavy beams across. Then they built the walls of shaped logs from the forest, and filled in the cracks by plastering them thickly with pounded clay until the outside was smooth and weatherproof. As soon as the clay had hardened they whitewashed the whole house (except the roof) both inside and out.

Here comes Tomá. He has not been expecting us, for he is dressed in his working clothes. He is wearing a high lambskin cap, which he will lay aside for a broad-brimmed hat of black felt in the summer. A long, white, tunic shirt of linen hangs from his shoulders to his knees, and is girt in at the waist by a wide sash of red woollen stuff wound round and round many times. His trousers fit his legs tightly, but they are tucked up in little folds all along, for

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

they are about twice the length of his legs ! On his feet he wears comfortable sandals of pig's hide. His holiday dress is made of better material, and his tunic is richly embroidered at the neck and at the hem. And instead of sandals he wears leather boots with high strong heels, with which he can beat the floor when he is dancing !

Tomá invites us into the house. We enter a big room, with little furniture in it. There is an enormous oven with a hearth in front of it, and a brick stool built into the wall beside it. Round the wall are bags of maize or wheat, jars of wine, and so forth. A peep behind the door shows us the hand-mill in which the maize is ground.

We pass into another room, which is the best room. The tiny windows have pretty curtains, and wooden benches run round the room to serve as beds for the children. The best bed stands behind the big oven, which makes it a cosy place in winter. Over it, from the big black beam, hangs the Sunday clothes of the family, covered by a sheet of cloth. A table and some chairs form the rest of the furniture.

WORK AND PLAY

Look outside the cottage and you will see that it has a kind of yard in front with sheds for the cattle ; and behind the house is a pretty garden, fenced with thorn-bush. Along the bottom of the garden runs a sparkling streamlet which supplies the family with water.

Tomá tells us that everybody is glad when the snow melts, for it means that every day people

TOMÁ OF ROUMANIA

will be able to spend more and more of their time in the open air—which is what the Roumanian peasants love

Ileana takes care on the First of March to hang a coin on a red and white cord round her neck until the coming of the first blossom. She does this to make sure that she will have a fair, white-and-pink face! She and Tomá love to watch the storks come back and build their nests in the same old spots

When the cuckoo comes, Tomá and his father yoke the big oxen to the plough and begin ploughing their tiny fields. They work all day. The sun is their clock, and the moon their calendar. Soon sowing begins, and not long after, the sturdy grain begins to push through the black earth its strong green blades

Then hay making comes, and you can see the long row of sturdy mowers swinging their scythes, and cutting down armfuls of lovely flowers with the seeding grass. And there is weeding to be done, there are animals to be fed, and there is wood to be fetched in to pile up for the snowy winter. So both Tomá and Ileana find plenty to do

But they have their pleasures too. Every Sunday there is dancing—outdoors when it is fine, indoors if it is wet. At Easter, quaint roundabout swings are set up, and Tomá and Ileana love to take their turn in them. Sometimes the gipsies come with their band, and the whole village turns out to join in the songs and dances

CHAPTER XXIV

ABDUL OF TURKEY

ABDUL belongs to a people who are not really Europeans at all. His ancestors came from Asia long ago, and forced a way into Europe with the scimitar and spear.

If you look at the map of Europe and find the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, you will notice that the continent of Asia sticks out a big shoulder of land called Asia Minor—"little Asia." Asia Minor, you will see, is separated from Europe only by very narrow straits. One of these straits is the Dardanelles, of which we heard so much during the War. The other, farther to the north east, is the Bosphorus, on an arm of which stands the great Turkish city of Constantinople.

Across these straits, Abdul's ancestors, a fierce and warlike people, fought their way into Europe, and in a few hundred years they had made themselves masters of a huge piece of land in south-east Europe, reaching nearly up to Vienna, and including the whole of the Balkan Peninsula.

Since those days, however, the power of the Turks has gradually become less and less, and their country has become smaller, until now they have only a little corner of land by their city



ABDUL FATIMAH AND THEIR MOTHER

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

Constantinople. There are many Turks, however, who live in countries belonging to other nations.

ABDUL'S HOME

Abdul lives in the country. His father is a well-to-do farmer, who lives in a small village in a sheltered valley among high hills. Abdul is better off than many of the village boys, for his father has a better house than most of the peasants; his flocks of sheep and goats are bigger, and he has tidy little patches of corn around his house to provide him with bread.

Abdul's house is built of sun-dried bricks and wood. When we go there we can see only the red-tiled roof, with a great, untidy stork's nest upon it, peeping above the high walls which surround the house, gardens, sheds, and stables. Let us go inside that narrow door into the garden. What a blaze of colour meets our eyes—scarlet and white roses, an arched-way covered with wistaria in full blossom and flowers of many colours by the stone paths that lead to the house.

Here is Abdul. His flower-pot-shaped hat (the *fez*) has a fine white kerchief wound round it like a sort of turban, with gold embroidery on its front. He wears a loose, blue cotton shirt and very loose, baggy breeches of white. His legs are bare. On his feet are canoe-shaped, sandal-like shoes of raw hide, held in place by long leather thongs wound round and round his ankles.

He invites us into the house. We see now that the upper part projects over the ground-floor, in a balcony which is almost shut in by screens

ABDUL OF TURKEY

of carved and pierced wood. The roof overhangs all in broad eaves. Beautiful climbing plants hang in festoons along the outer walls. The "front door" is smaller than most of our "back doors," and when we seem surprised at it, Abdul explains that the best door opens on to the inner garden, where a little fountain dances merrily, and where his mother and his sister Fatimah can sit in peace and sew and talk, when they are not at work in the gardens.

In the large room which we enter, we notice divans (sofas or settees) round three sides of it, and on them are piles of wadded quilts and soft cushions. A beautiful carpet covers the floor. A tall carved cupboard and one or two long carved wooden chests for clothes complete the furniture.

As soon as we arrive, a basin and ewer of metal are set before us, so that we can wash before taking our meal. Every Turk is careful to wash his hands both before and after meals. We wipe our hands on fine soft towels, with edges fringed and embroidered—the work of Fatimah and her mother.

THE VILLAGE

We do not see Fatimah until we are about to go with Abdul to see the village. Like most Turkish girls and women, she is shy, and does not talk to strangers. She is dressed in a very loose robe, which seems gathered in at her ankles, so that she appears to wear very long loose baggy trousers. Her heelless slippers are of crimson leather, embroidered with gold thread. When she comes

ABDUL OF TURKEY

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THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

forward to talk to us she wears a thin veil, which hangs just below her eyes

Turkish ladies out walking look very much like bundles of clothes. Over their indoor dress they throw a kind of cloak. Their heads and most of their faces are covered with a veil, so that strangers may not see their faces.

The village street is very crooked, the houses are not built in line as ours are, but some stand forward while others are a little back from the dusty street. Some are very poor, and built only of sun dried mud, but the best are of wood, with overhanging upper storeys. They have no front doors opening to the streets—only little gateways, which are really back doors.

That big building with tall slender towers and a big yellow and green bulbous dome is the mosque. The slender towers are the minarets, from whose little balconies the *muezzins* proclaim the hour of prayer—when every true Mohammedan ceases what he is doing, spreads his prayer carpet, if he has it with him, takes off his shoes, and bows his head to the ground towards Mecca the sacred city.

There is a stork's nest on one of the minarets. When we point it out to Abdul he tells us that no man would harm a stork. Is he not Haji Baba? And does he not go on pilgrimage every year, as a good Mussulman should? Besides, he is old—older than Abdul's grandfather, and age must be respected.

CHAPTER XXV

HANS OF GERMANY

HANS lives in a pretty little village that is tucked away behind a bend in the river valley. Whichever way you approach it, you come upon it quite suddenly—whether you are coming by river and see it directly you get round the bend, or whether you are tramping through the dark pinewoods on the hills and get an unexpected peep of a bulbous church steeple below you.

But when you *do* see it, there is no doubt of its beauty. It reminds you of the pictures you see on old fashioned Christmas cards when you go there in winter, and in summer you can't help thinking of the pictures in that book of fairy tales you love so well.

The little houses with their high peaked red roofs and painted balconies, the big house where the rich man lives, the quaint little church, and the market place are all just like those in the fairy tales. Look! up there on the hillsides is the forest, quiet and dark and mysterious just as it is in Grimm's stories, and there you will find charcoal-burners that are exactly like those poor charcoal-burners you read of, with tiny cottages and with "seventh sons" who can do all kinds of wonderful things!

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

HANS AND HIS FRIENDS

Let us go down to Hans' village from the hills, by the path that leads across fields yellow with colza, or purple with clover, or golden with grain. On the way we look up at the hillside on our left, and see that it is clad with vines all the way up. Each vine is tied to its vine prop, and stands in its proper rank as if it were a soldier in an army, the whole hillside at this spot is terraced to the very top, and planted with vines in orderly rows that from a distance remind us a little of the fields of scarlet-runners we sometimes see in parts of England.

On the other side of the river that glides smoothly on its winding course through the hills, there rises a steep high peak that is crowned with a ruined castle. Hans will tell you that it belonged to a robber baron who lived long ago, and who was so wicked and cruel that evil spirits came one night and flew away with him. Hans' brother Fritz, who is big and strong, has been up there, and says that nothing is to be seen nowadays but the tall stump of a broken tower, some crumbling walls, and a deep wide pit in the rock which was once the dungeon of the castle.

Here we are near the village. See how it nestles among fruit-trees. And here is a flock of geese, with a real goose-girl looking after them! How they cackle and hiss as we come near, but one glimpse of the long stick which the goose-girl carries is quite sufficient to make them behave! Why, she is Gretchen, Hans' sister, with plaits of



PLUCKING THE HEAVY BUNCHES OF RIPE GRAPES

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

flaxen hair, striped woollen petticoat, and velvet bodice, and all—just what we expected she would be. And here is young Hans with cousin Fritz coming from school, satchel on back. He is dressed much like a country boy in England, except for his cap, which is peaked and has a top that flops over on one side like an exhausted concertina. His trousers are too short perhaps, and his shoes too big and stoutly made, to allow us to call him elegant. But he is a good fellow, a hard worker, and honest and brave; and although he is *only* a peasant, as rich folk would say, he will grow up into a fine man some day.

WORK AND PLAY

Hans and Gretchen live on a small farm which belongs to their father. When he is too old to carry on the farm Hans and his brothers will do so. Meanwhile, all the boys—and Gretchen as well—do as much as they can to help.

There are the cows to attend to, and the horses to feed. The geese and other poultry are Gretchen's special care. When there is work to be done in the fields, every one in the family takes part in it. In holiday time Hans is up at dawn and off to work in the fields. His day's work is a long one.

Even in winter, when the snow covers forest and hillside, there is wood to be cut, and the animals must be fed and tended. But Hans has more time to himself, and he and his sister listen to age-old fairy-tales told by their mother as she spins and weaves, or makes wonderful lace while the children

HANS OF GERMANY

carve pretty toys from the soft pinewood of the forest

In summer, when the crops are ripening, and there is some time to spare, the children go off into the forest, or wander long distances by the winding river. Sometimes there is a holiday in the village, all the people don their gayest dresses, and there are dances and games and songs. For the country life in this out of the way village is not very much different from what it was fifty or a hundred years ago, even in these days of motor cars.

Yet not so far away beyond the skyline are big smoky cities, where busy factories are working day and night making steel and iron goods, or cottons, silks, and woollens, or chemicals. But Hans and Gretchen do not like the great cities—they love their own little village too well and everything in it—even Father Stork, who comes back every spring to his nest on the farmhouse chimney top.

If you were to ask Hans and Gretchen which time of the year they love best, they would say, "Vintage time of course!"

When autumn comes, the hundreds of terraces of vines are heavily laden with bunches of grapes and in the village you will see people busy washing clean as new pins the scarlet and green winepresses that will be so busy presently. Outside the carpenter's house you notice them stacked high in a noble green and red pile.

One fine day the big presses are put in the ox carts and the slow oxen pull them up the steep and winding roads to the vineyards where men and women, boys and girls, are hard at work all day long.

THE CHILDREN OF EUROPE

plucking the heavy bunches of ripe grapes. The whole village seems to be up, there.

The carriers, with high-piled baskets strapped to their broad backs, climb short ladders perched against the ox-carts, and tip their rich ripe loads into the gaping presses. When the presses are full, down they go to the village, where the grapes have their cool juice pressed out of them to be turned in time into wine that is famous all the world over. But that is only when the juice has been kept a long time, and has undergone wonderful changes.

THE GREAT RIVER

The river by which the village stands flows into a great river many miles from Hans' home. You can easily find the big river on a map, for it is one of the most important, not only in Germany, but in the world.

It is called the Rhine.

On its broad bosom you will see steamers big enough to go across to America, as well as great fleets of barges towed by powerful tugs, and enormous rafts of timber from the German forests.

It rises among the mountains of Switzerland. Then for many miles it forms the boundary of *France and Germany*. *Hundreds of miles farther on*, having passed through Western Germany, the Rhine enters Holland and flows by many streams into the North Sea.

Some day, perhaps, you may take a steamer from London or Harwich and go across the North Sea to Rotterdam, where you can go on board a river

HANS OF GERMANY

steamer that will take you up the great river to the place where Hans' little one joins it. Then you can walk along the valley until suddenly, round a bend, you come upon the village where Hans and Gretchen live.

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